

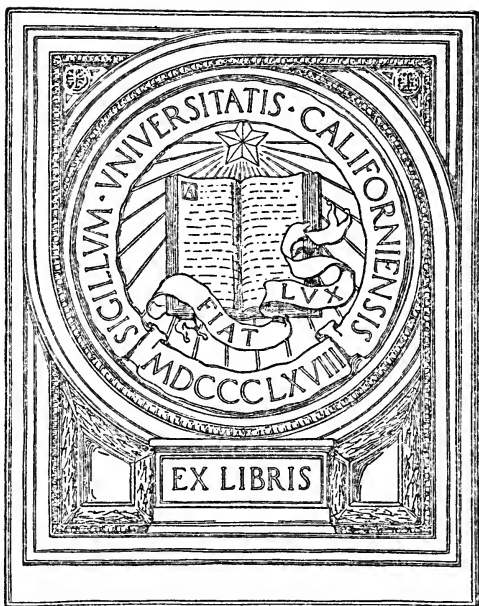
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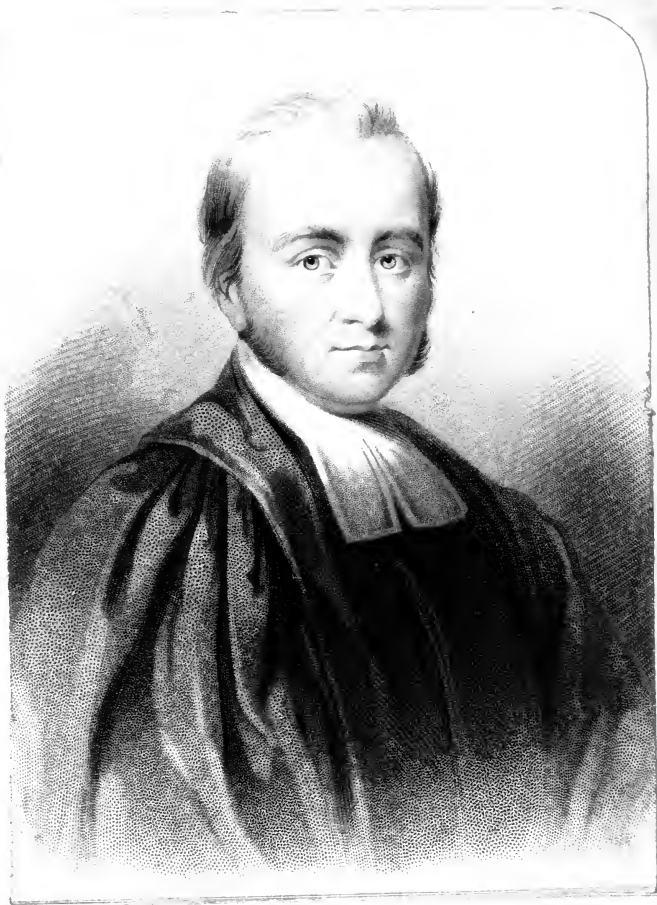
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Here is rather a touching bit about John Skinner, the author of "Tullochgorum," a dance which, according to my excellent friend the Rev. Mr. M'Caig of Muckairn, is a very delightful and exhilarating performance. "His manse stood in a dreary plain, almost two miles square, in which neither tree nor stone nor shrub, unless a straggling bush of broom deserved the name, was to be seen, and there it was his consolation to say, 'My taper never burns in vain.' The light was always at night shining in his window; he never permitted curtain or shutter to intercept its rays. He used to say, 'It may cheer some roaming youth or solitary traveller, since the Polar-star is not truer to its position than is the position of the *Linehart* (the name of his house) in its rise and setting, true to the Buchan Hind."



AMUSEMENTS
OF
LEISURE HOURS:
OR
POETICAL PIECES,
CHIEFLY IN THE
SCOTTISH DIALECT:

BY THE LATE
REVEREND JOHN SKINNER;
AT LONGSIDE, ABERDEENSHIRE.

To which is Prefixed,
A SKETCH OF THE AUTHOR'S LIFE,
With Some
REMARKS ON SCOTTISH POETRY.

" An early wish, (I mind it's power)
" I had, and to my latest hour
" It still shall heave my breast,
" That I, for poor auld Scotland's sake,
" Some useful plan, or beuk could make,
" Or sing a sang at least."

Burns, Vol. V. p. 345.

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BY ALEXANDER BROWN, ABERDEEN;

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SKETCH
OF
THE AUTHOR'S LIFE:
WITH
RE MARKS
ON
SCOTTISH POETRY.

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SKETCH
OF
THE AUTHOR'S LIFE,

&c. &c.

IN a short Memoir prefixed to his posthumous works lately published, some account has been given of the Life and Character of the Author of the few pieces of fugitive poetry, which now appear in this little volume. The proper introduction to Mr Skinner's Theological Works seemed to be a sketch of his literary, or, what may be called, his ecclesiastical character: and in that sketch, the reader has been made sufficiently acquainted with the studies, correspondence, writings, and modes of thinking, of a man, who spent a long and laborious life in the pastoral charge of a numerous congregation in a remote parish in the north of Scotland, and who answered most literally to Goldsmith's description of the Village-Preacher:

“ A man he was, to all the country dear,
“ And passing rich with forty pounds a year,
“ Remote from towns he ran his godly race,
“ Nor ere had chang'd,—nor wish'd to change
“ his place !”

If a stranger to his graver productions, and thus unpossessed of the information contained in the Me-

moir of Mr Skinner prefixed to those, the reader of this small publication should wish to be made acquainted with the birth, and parentage, as well as the principles of its author, it may be sufficient to say, that the Reverend JOHN SKINNER, for nearly *sixty-five* years minister of the Episcopal congregation at Longside near Peterhead, was born at Balfour in the parish of Birse, Aberdeenshire, on the 3d of October 1721. His father, then schoolmaster of that parish, was of the same name, and had married Mrs Jean Gillanders, the widow of Donald Farquharson Esq. of Balfour. About two years after the birth of their only son, (the subject of this short memoir) the mother died, when his father removed to the parish of Echt, within a few miles of Aberdeen, where he continued to discharge the duties of parochial teacher for full fifty years, to the entire satisfaction of many persons of distinction, whose children were entrusted to his care and tuition; and so great was his diligence in the line of his profession, that he fitted out more young men for the University, than most country schoolmasters of his time. After having been several years a widower, he married a second time, and had a numerous family. His eldest son, our Author, studied under his father; and, at a very early period, displayed an uncommon genius, particularly for acquiring the knowledge of the Latin language. When only thirteen years of age, he appeared a candidate at the annual competition in Marischal College Aberdeen, and gained a considerable bursary, which he enjoyed dur-

ing the usual term of four sessions in that University.

Having finished his academical courses, his first employment was as a teacher for a few months in the parish school of Kemnay near Aberdeen. From thence he went to the adjoining parish of Monymusk, and acted as assistant to the schoolmaster there, until Lady Grant, having seen some of his poetical effusions in the Scottish dialect, was pleased to encourage his rustic muse, by affording him, in the house of Monymusk, every accommodation for pursuing his studies, and improving his mind in the attainment of useful learning. Here it was, that, enjoying the conversation, and the benefit of reading under the direction, of a worthy Episcopal Clergyman in that neighbourhood, he declared his predilection for the principles of Episcopacy, and united himself to the venerable remains of that church, the civil establishment of which was overturned at the Revolution. This in some degree disappointed the views of his father, who had naturally flattered himself, that a son of such promising talents would in time have made a figure in that Church which is now the religious establishment of Scotland. But respecting, as a man of piety and good sense could not fail to respect, the conscientious and disinterested motives by which his young friend was actuated, the only sentiment which remained for the father to cherish, was a fervent wish that the son might shew himself sincere in his profession, and do credit to the new principles which he had adopted. His attachment to these

principles was soon after strengthened by a circumstance, which at once gave him an opportunity of making some farther enquiry into the truth of them, and, by the consequences resulting from it, was the means of fixing his future destiny in life.

Having, in the summer of 1740, accepted an invitation to become tutor to a gentleman's son in Shetland, he was there introduced to the acquaintance of the Reverend Mr Hunter, the only Episcopal Clergyman in that country, from whose company and conversation he found such kind assistance in the prosecution of his studies, and such unaffected zeal for his happy accomplishing the object of them, as made him anxiously wish for a still nearer connection with one of so amiable a character, and from whom he had already experienced such disinterested friendship as seemed to flow from paternal affection. Nor did he, in this, form a vain expectation; for, before he quitted the society of his venerable friend, and took leave of the Shetland Isles, he had the happiness of receiving in marriage the hand of Mr Hunter's eldest daughter, and with her the best of all earthly blessings, a sweetly soothing, affectionate wife, who was his dear companion, and ministered tenderly to all his wants, for the uncommon space of *fifty-eight* years.

Having returned to Aberdeenshire, and completed his preparatory studies, with a view to his entering into the sacred ministry, he received holy orders from a Bishop of the Scotch Church; and a vacancy happening in the Episcopal Congregation at Longside, by the removal to Dundee of its beloved pastor Mr William Robertson, Mr Skinner was imme-

diately appointed his successor, and in November 1742, at their unanimous desire, became Pastor of a large and respectable congregation. The ties of pastoral regard and affection, by which he was so long united to his beloved flock, could be cut asunder only by the stroke of death; and this dissolution, of all his earthly connections, having happened on the 16th of June 1807, his sorrowing people had no sooner committed his body to the ground, than they set on foot a subscription, for raising a handsome monument to his memory, which has accordingly been erected in the church-yard of Longside, with a suitable inscription, expressive of that sincere and grateful veneration, with which his labours will be long remembered in the portion of the christian vineyard to which his services were devoted.

Without farther reference to these services, it need only be observed, at present, that even his poetic genius was exercised in the cause of religious truth and virtue. The productions of his fancy, when thrown into simple verse, had always a moral tendency; and the humour displayed in those effusions of a lively imagination, while it afforded a little sportive play, held out also some useful lesson to the youthful mind. Even in the more advanced periods of his life, he was ever ready to shew this peculiar application of his versifying powers. When surrounded by his grand-children in their early years, it was delightful to see how he could adapt himself to their yet humble but rising capacities. He would make them verses by the hour. He would puzzle them with riddles, and little arithmetical problems of

his own invention. He would try to call forth the latent spark of genius, by proposing questions on the different branches of study in which they were occupied at school. Although in themselves simple, and easy of solution, yet the grandfather had such art in quaintly arranging, and in enigmatically expressing, his questions, as conveyed the idea of extreme difficulty ; while, at the same time, no sooner did he himself proceed to unravel the seeming mystery, than even children blushed to find themselves duped and outwitted by means so completely within the reach of their own detection. On one occasion of this kind, when his oldest grandson could not discover the little artifice employed to perplex him, he was not a little alarmed by hearing his grandfather say, that even *Thomas the Rhymer* had prophesied on the subject of the *fourth* John Skinner's lamentable weakness of mind, and want of capacity,—

“ The world shall *four John Skinners* see,

“ The *first* shall teach a school,—

“ The other two shall parsons be,

“ And the *fourth* shall be a *fool* !”

His old friend however afterwards made him ample amends for this rhyming jeu d'esprit. For after the young man became a clergyman, and *grandfather, father, and son*, had *all* officiated at one, and the same diet of worship at the chapel at Longside, he presented him with the following beautiful Latin verses. They are here inserted, not because free from the *licentia poetica*, but because, mingled

with the proverbial blindness of a grandfather's partiality, the *poetical license* has completely usurped the place of *truth*, and given the *manner*, and not the *matter*, a claim to the notice of the learned reader.

“ Sanguinis ejusdem *tres* implent rostra JOANNES,

“ Est *avus*, est *pater*, est carus utrique *nepos* :

“ Ingeniô *primus*, sermonis laude *secundus*

“ Claret ; in ambobus *tertius* ille nitet.

“ Non potuere ultrâ Naturæ tendere vires,

“ Miscet *avo patrem*, et fingitur inde *nepos* !”

These lines being shewn to a friend, the following attempt was made to put them into English,—

“ Of the same blood, in pulpit now *three* JOHNS appear,

“ *Grandfather*, *Father*, and (alike to both) a *Grandson* dear,

“ The *first* for genius fam'd ; the *second* for the preacher's art,

“ In both of which the *third* now plays a shining part !

“ The powers of nature's self no farther stretch could bear,

“ The *son* she with the *father* blends, and does the *grand-son* rear !

It has already been mentioned, that some of our Author's poetical effusions in the Scottish dialect were the means of introducing him to the notice of Lady Grant of Monymusk. Among these were verses written on a visit to that beautiful spot of pleasure ground, called *Paradise*, which Sir Archibald Grant had laid out on the banks of the river Don. But of these verses no copy can now be recovered, and it was with difficulty that a scroll was

found in the author's own hand-writing, of Another of his early productions, to which he gave the title of "*The Christmas Ba'ing*," and which very properly takes the first place in this small collection. When he wrote this little piece the Author was not 17 years of age. It may be proper, at the same time, to state, that at that period, and from time immemorial, it had been the practice in most of the country parishes in Aberdeenshire, for parties of young men to assemble, about the Christmas season, to try their strength and agility at the athletic exercise of *foot-ball*. The contest generally took place in the kirk-yard of the parish. It was while our Author resided at Monymusk, and in consequence of having witnessed one of these scenes, that the humorous and descriptive poem alluded to made its appearance. It seems to have been designed as a humble imitation of the old poem, ascribed to *James the First* of Scotland, called "*Christ-kirk o' the green*," of which our Author was so fond; that before he was twelve years of age, he had it all by heart, and afterwards gave an elegant translation of it into Latin verse, which has been much admired by some of the ablest judges of such compositions.

From his earliest youth he appears to have had a particular turn for exhibiting what he called, his "*old-fashioned-muse*," in the humble garb of the old Scottish language. On the subject of this language much diversity of opinion has prevailed. By some philological writers, it has been represented as nothing better than a collection of *barbarous dialects*, so widely differing in the southern and north-

ern provinces, as to make it almost impossible for the inhabitants of the one part of the kingdom to understand the language vulgarly used in the other part. Yet it is a circumstance well known, that no farther back than about the fourteenth century, there was hardly any difference in the language of the two British nations. The English, under the Edwards, and the Scots, under Wallace and Bruce, perfectly understood each other; and even with regard to poetry, it has been justly observed, that the history of it in Scotland may be carried up to a period nearly as remote as in England. The ancient poets of Scotland, Barbour, and Blind Harry, James the First, Dunbar, Douglas, and Lindsay, were coeval with those who have been considered as the fathers of English poetry, and are acknowledged to be no-wise inferior to them, either in genius, or in composition. It is true, the language of the two countries began gradually to assume somewhat of a different appearance. Yet the difference on the whole was not considerable, nor greater perhaps than between the different dialects of the different provinces of England at the present day.

At last, however, owing to various causes, the study of the English language, as seeming to differ widely from the Scotch, was cultivated by persons in the higher classes of society, from the consideration of that language being established as the standard for elegant writing, and polite conversation. But, as national prejudices were not easily subdued, the far greater part of the Scottish nation continued to use their native dialect, and, till the middle of

of the last century, the language of North Britain was much the same among all ranks of inhabitants, equally in the mouths of the peer and the peasant, and well understood through all the intermediate orders*. Why then should it be represented as a composition of various discordant dialects, each of them abounding in its peculiar barbarisms, intelligible only in the particular province, or district, to which they belong? Yet this seems to have been the opinion of the late celebrated Dr BEATTIE, who used to observe, that the common people of *Aberdeen* spoke a language that would scarce be understood in *Fife*; and that the difference of the dialect of *Lothian* from that of *Buchan*, might be seen by comparing Ramsay's "*Gentle Shepherd*" written in the former dialect, with "*Ajax's speech to the Grecian Knabbs*," as a specimen of the latter†. That no sort of difference exists between these two dialects, will not be pretended: but every person acquainted with the common people of *Buchan* must know, that the comedy of the *Gentle Shepherd* is to be met with al-

* For some of these remarks on the Scottish language, the Editor is indebted to Dr Currie in his life of Burns, who also acknowledges his obligations to the kindness of his ingenious and worthy friend, JOHN RAMSAY Esq. of Ochertyre, near Stirling, with whom Mr Skinner at Longside had the pleasure, for several years, of carrying on an epistolary correspondence of the most interesting kind.

† See the Life of Dr Beattie, by Sir William Forbes. Vol. II. page 19.

most in every family, and that passages may be daily heard repeated from it, with a feeling of delight which can arise only from a full perception of the beauties which they display, and from a just admiration of the tender, pathetic language, in which the sentiments are conveyed.

A similar remark may be applied to other poetical effusions, which have issued from the Southern districts in the Scottish language;—and the just celebrity which has been attached to those of the *immortal BURNS*, through the whole of Scotland, is a striking proof, that the delightful productions of his *Scottish* muse, have been fully understood (if we except only the Gaelic districts) from one end of “fair Scotia” to the other. Writers no less eminent than those already alluded to, have therefore deemed it absurd to speak of the dialects of Scotland, as intelligible only in the several provinces to which they are said respectively to belong. Though there may be a few vulgar phrases peculiar to every district of Scotland, which is equally the case in the different districts of England, there is yet a *Scotch language* common to the *whole of Scotland*, and which, with the exception of the Gaelic Highlands above noticed, is universally spoken, not only among the lower ranks of people, but even by those of the higher classes in their early years, and till either long residence in England, or with English people, has made them forget, or a fastidious taste has made them wish to forget, their native tongue. This is the consequence of those unceasing efforts, which have been made to assimilate the language of Scotland as nearly as pos-

sible to the pure English standard ; and hence arises the difficulty, or rather the impossibility, of writing in the Scottish dialect, without exciting a kind of disgust ; not so common perhaps in England, as among those of the Scottish nation who are ambitious of literary fame, or of rising to eminence at the Bar, or in the Senate of the United Kingdom. It has been frequently observed, by those who have had opportunities of making the observation, that an Englishman, if he understands the meaning of the words used in Scottish poetry, is so far from being offended, that he is rather pleased, with the ideas which they convey, and the feelings which they are so well calculated to excite by their native force, and simplicity of diction ; whereas a Scotchman, ambitious of literary fame, or who wishes it to be thought that he has attained the object of his ambition, is at pains to banish such vernacular words not only from his writings, but also from his lips, because, having been early and daily accustomed to hear them from the vulgar, he deems them totally unfit for the ornamental elevated style, by which, in his estimation, poetry ought to be distinguished. Yet a dislike of this kind is to be considered as merely accidental, or factitious, and by no means natural. It is indeed the more unnatural, as it deprives those who give way to it, of the pleasure which they might otherwise feel in perusing those exquisite pieces of Scottish poetry, so highly admired by all who are capable of appreciating their merits, but which can excite no admiration in the minds of those who have expelled from their memories, as well as from their

mouths, the language in which the poetry of Scotland is written.

It is universally acknowledged, that this country possesses a very peculiar and interesting species of music; and it is the alliance of the words of the Scottish songs with the music by which they are accompanied, that has established the fame of both, and given them a popularity which will not easily be wrested from them. It must be evident, therefore, that those who are most enthusiastically fond of the ancient Scottish music, must yet be incapable of enjoying what adds greatly to the rapture of its sweetly soothing melody, if they happen to be ignorant of the meaning and pathos of those soft, heart-melting lines, to which the music serves as so delightful an accompaniment. It is from his *Scottish Songs* that BURNS has derived his highest meed of praise, insomuch that, as his biographer justly remarks, “some of his latter compositions of this kind “may be compared, in polished delicacy, with the “finest songs in our language, while in the eloquence “of sensibility, they surpass them all. Besides, there “is no species of poetry,” as Dr Currie well observes, “so much calculated to influence the morals, “as well as the happiness of a people, as those popular verses which are associated with national airs, “and which, being learnt in the years of infancy, “make a deep impression on the heart before the “evolution of the powers of the understanding. “The compositions of Burns, of this kind, like all “his other writings, exhibit independence of sentiment: they are peculiarly calculated to increase

“ those ties which bind generous hearts to their
 “ native soil, and to the domestic circle of their in-
 “ fancy ; and to cherish those sensibilities which,
 “ under due restriction, form the purest happiness of
 “ our nature.”

If, then, such was the aim and object, and such, it may be hoped, the happy tendency of the compositions of Burns, may it not also be presumed, that the few poetic pieces contained in this little volume, will bear their humble share in producing the same salutary effect ? “ Burns,” says the writer of his Life, “ wrote professedly for the peasantry of his country, and by them their native dialect is universally relished.” What is here presented to the public, was written under the same conviction, and with a similar view to the employing *Scottish Rhyme* as a pleasing instructor of *Scottish Youth*. The declared purpose of Burns was to paint the manners of rustic life, among his “ humble compeers,” and thereby allure them to the love and practice of virtue ; and how beautifully has he expressed his earnest, anxious wish, for such a blessing to his country, in these admirable lines of his “ *Cottar’s Saturday Night!*”

“ O *Scotia!* my dear, my native soil !

“ For whom my warmest wish to heaven is sent !

“ Long may thy hardy sons of rustic toil,

“ Be blest with health, and peace, and sweet
 content !

“ And O ! may Heav’n their simple lives prevent

“ From luxury’s contagion, weak and vile !

“Then, howe’er *crowns* and *coronets* be rent,
 “A *virtuous populace* may rise the while,
 “And stand a “wall of fire” around their much
 lov’d *Isle*.”

Pouring forth such patriotic strains as these, it is no wonder that the muse of Burns was hailed by his delighted countrymen, as the pride and pleasure of the land which gave him birth : And if the flow of poetic fervour from the pen of an *Ayrshire Plowman* has been so well understood, and so highly prized by all the genuine “lovers of song” throughout the kingdom, may it not be hoped, that some share of public favour will be shewn to the poetic effusions of a *Buchan Parson*, so well known by the designation of the *Reverend Author of Tullochgorum*, and whom *Burns*, as will appear from the following correspondence, was pleased to hail a “*brother Bard?*”

In the autumn of the year 1787, Mr Burns was induced, by very flattering invitations, to make a tour through the west and north of Scotland, which he thus describes in a letter to his brother Gilbert, dated at *Edinburgh*, 17th September 1787 :

“ I arrived here safe yesterday evening, after a tour of 22 days, and travelling near six hundred miles, windings included. My farthest stretch was about ten miles beyond Inverness. I went through the heart of the Highlands, by Crieff, Taymouth, the famous seat of Lord Breadalbane, down the Tay, among cascades, and druidical circles of stones, to

Dunkeld, a seat of the Duke of Athole ; thence across Tay, and up one of his tributary streams to Blair of Athole, another of the Duke's seats, where I had the honour of spending nearly two days with his Grace and family ; thence many miles through a wild country, among cliffs grey with eternal snows, and gloomy savage glens, till I crossed Spey, and went down the stream through Strathspey, so famous in Scottish music, Badenoch, &c., till I reached Grant Castle, where I spent half a day with Sir James Grant and family ; and then crossed the country for Fort George, but called by the way at Cawdor, the ancient seat of Macduff. There I saw the identical bed in which, tradition says, King Duncan was murdered ; lastly, from Fort George to Inverness. I returned by the coast through Nairn, Forres, and so on to *Aberdeen*. The rest of my stages are not worth rehearsing ; warm, as I was, from Ossian's country, where I had seen his very grave, what cared I for fishing towns or fertile carses ? I slept at the famous Brodie of Brodie's one night, and dined at Gordon Castle next day, with the Duke, Duchess, and family."

On his arrival at Aberdeen, Mr Burns having called on Mr Chalmers, the printer, our Author's son happened to meet him on the stair of the printing-office, and having accompanied him into an adjoining room, was much entertained by an hour's conference on several very interesting topics. Of this interview he wrote a particular account to his father, mentioning also how much Burns regretted that he did not know where *Linshart* lay, as he would have

gone twenty miles out of his way to have seen the Author of *Tullochgorum*. This compliment produced an acknowledgment, under the title of a “*Familiar Epistle to Robie Burns, the Plowman Poet, in his own style.*” The following account of it appears in a letter to Miss Margaret Chalmers, (now Mrs Hay of Edinburgh) in Cromek’s “*Reliques of Robert Burns,*” &c. lately published, where he says,—“I got an excellent poetic epistle yesternight from the old venerable Author of *Tullochgorum*, John of Badenyon, &c. I suppose you know he is a clergyman. It is by far the finest poetic compliment I ever got. I will send you a copy of it.”

The Epistle is as follows :

“O happy hour for evermair,
That led my chill * up *Cha’mers’ stair*,
And gae him, what he values sair,
Sae braw a skance
Of Ayrshire’s dainty Poet there,
By lucky chance.

“Wae’s my auld heart I was na wi’ you,
Tho’ worth your while I could na gie you;
But sin’ I had na hap to see you,
Whan ye was north,
I’m bauld to send my service to you,
Hyne o’er the Forth.

* Child.

“ Sae proud ’s I am, that ye hae heard
 O’ my attempts to be a Bard,
 And think my muse nae that ill-fawrd,
 Seil o’ your face !
 I wadna wish for mair reward
 Than your guid grace.

“ Your bonny beukie, line by line,
 I ’ve read, and think it freely fine ;
 Indeed, I winna ca ’t divine,
 As others might :
 For that, ye ken, frae pen like mine,
 Wad no be right.

“ But, by my sang, I dinna wonner,
 That ye ’ve admirers mony hun’er ;
 Let gowkit fleeps pretend to skunner,
 And tak offence,
 Ye ’ve naething said that leuks like blun’er,
 To fowk o’ sense.

“ Your pauky “ Dream ” has humour in ’t ;
 I never saw the like in print.
 The Birth-day Laurit durst na’ mint,
 As ye hae dane ;
 And yet there ’s nae a single hint
 Can be ill ta’en.

“ Your “ Mailie,” and your guid “ Auld Mare,”
 And “ Hallow-even’s ” funny cheer—
 There’s nane that reads them far nor near
 But reezes Robie ;

“ And thinks them as diverting gear
As Yorrick’s Tobie.

“ But O the weil-tauld “ Cottar’s Night”
Is what gies me the maist delight—
A piece sae finish’d and sae tight,
There ’s nane o’s a’
Cou’d preachment timmer cleaner dight
In kirk or ha’.

“ But what needs this or that to name ?
It’s own’d by a’, there ’s nae a theme
Ye tak in hand, but ’s a’ the same :
And nae ane o’ them,
But weel may challenge a’ the fame
That we can gie them.

“ For me, I heartily allow you
The warld of praise sae justly due you ;
And but a *PLOWMAN* !—sall I trow you ?
Gin it be sae,
A miracle I will avow you,
Deny’t wha may !

“ Sae, what avails a leash o’ lair
’Thro’ sev’n lang years, and some guid mair,
Whan *Plowman* lad, wi’ nature bare,
Sae far surpasses
A’ we can do wi’ study sair
To climb Parnassus ?

“ But thanks to praise, ye ’re i’ your prime,
 And may chant on this lang, lang, time ;
 For lat me tell you, ’tware a crime
 To had your tongue,
 Wi’ sic a knack’s ye hae at rhyme,
 And ye sae young.

“ Ye ken, it’s nae for ane like me
 To be sae droll as ye can be,
 But ony help that I can gie,
 Tho ’t be but sma’,
 Your least command, I’se lat you see
 Sall gar me draw.

“ An hour or sae, by hook or crook,
 And may be twa, some orrow ouk,
 That I can spare frae haly beuk,
 For that’s my hobby,
 I’ll slip awa’ to some bye neuk,
 And crack wi’ Robie.

“ Wad ye but only crack again,
 Just what ye like, in ony strain,
 I’ll tak it kind ; for, to be plain,
 I do expect it ;—
 And mair than that, I’ll no be fain
 Gin ye neglect it.

“ To Linshart, gin my hame ye speir,
 Where I hae heft near fifty year,
 ’Twill come in course, ye need na fear,
 The part’s weel kent ;

“ And postage, be it cheap or dear,
I'll pay content.

“ Now, after a', hae me exquees'd
For wissing nae to be refees'd ;
I dinna covet to be reez'd

For this feel lilt.

But feel, or wise, gin ye be pleas'd,
Ye're welcome till 't.

“ Sae, canty Plowman, fare ye weel,
Lord bless you lang wi' hae and heil,
And keep you ay the honest chiel

That ye hae been ;

Syne lift you till a better beil

Whan this is dane !

P. S.

“ This auld Scot's muse I've courted lang,
And spar'd nae pains to win her ;

Dowf tho' I be in rustic sang,

I'm no a raw beginner.

But now auld age taks dowie turns,

Yet, troth, as I'm a sinner,

I'll ay be fond of Robie Burns

While I can sign—JOHN SKINNER.

“ *Linshart, 25th September 1787.*”

In answer to the above, our Author received the following letter from Burns, which, though without a date, appears to have been written in Edinburgh.

“ Reverend and Venerable Sir,

“ Accept, in plain dull prose, my most sincere thanks for the best poetical compliment I ever received. I assure you, Sir, as a poet, you have conjured up an airy demon of vanity in my fancy, which the best abilities in your *other* capacity would be ill able to lay. I regret, and while I live shall regret, that when I was in the north, I had not the pleasure of paying a younger brother’s dutiful respect to the Author of the best Scotch song ever Scotland saw,—“ Tullochgorum’s my delight !” The world may think slightly of the craft of song-making, if they please ; but, as Job says, “ O ! that mine adversary had written a book !” let them try. There is a certain something in the old Scotch songs, a wild happiness of thought and expression, which peculiarly marks them, not only from English songs, but also from the modern efforts of song-wrights, in our native manner and language. The only remains of this enchantment, these spells of the imagination, rests with you. Our true brother, Ross of Lochlee, was likewise “ owre cannie,”—a “ wild warlock”—but now he sings among the “ Sons of the morning.” I have often wished, and will certainly endeavour, to form a kind of common acquaintance among all the genuine sons of Caledonian song. The world, busy in low prosaic pursuits, may overlook most of us ;—but “ reverence thyself.” The world is not our *peers*,—so we challenge the jury. We can lash that world,—and find ourselves a very great source of amusement and happiness independent of that world. There is a work going on in Edinburgh, just now,

which claims your best assistance *. An Engraver in this town has set about collecting and publishing all the Scotch Songs, with the Music, that can be found. Songs in the English language, if by Scotchmen, are admitted; but the Music must all be Scotch. Drs Beattie and Blacklock are lending a hand, and the first musician in town presides over that department. I have been absolutely crazed about it, collecting old stanzas, and every information remaining, respecting their origin, authors, &c. This last is but a very fragment business; but at the end of his second number,—the first is already published,—a small account will be given of the Authors, particularly to preserve those of latter times. Your three songs, “*Tullochgorum, John of Badenyon, and Ezrie wi’ the crookit Horn,*” go in this second number. I was determined, before I got your letter, to write you, begging that you would let me know where the editions of these pieces may be found, as you would wish them to continue in future times; and if you would be so kind to this undertaking, as send any Songs, of your own or others, that you would think proper to publish. Your name will be inserted among the other authors, “*Nill ye, will ye.*” One half of Scotland already give your songs to other authors. Paper is done. I beg to hear from you,—the sooner the better, as I leave Edinburgh in a fortnight or three weeks. I am, with the warmest sincerity, Sir, your obliged humble servant,

ROBERT BURNS.”

* Johnson’s Musical Miscellany.

To this letter Mr Skinner's answer was as follows :

“ Sir, *Linshart, 14th November 1787.*

“ Your kind return, without date, but of post-mark October 25th, came to my hand only this day ; and, to testify my punctuality to my poetic engagement, I sit down immediately to answer it in kind. Your acknowledgment of my poor but just encomiums on your surprising genius, and your opinion of my rhyming excursions, are both, I think, by far too high. The difference between our two tracks of education, and ways of life, is entirely in your favour, and gives you the preference every manner of way. I know a classical education will not create a versifying taste, but it mightily improves and assists it ; and though, where both these meet, there may sometimes be ground for approbation, yet where taste appears single, as it were, and neither cramped nor supported by acquisition, I will always sustain the justice of its prior claim to applause. A small portion of taste this way I have had almost from childhood, especially in the old Scottish dialect ; and it is as old a thing as I remember, my fondness for “ *Chryste-Kirk o' the Green*,” which I had by heart ere I was twelve years of age, and which, some years ago, I attempted to turn into Latin verse. While I was young, I dabbled a good deal in these things ; but, on getting the black gown, I gave it pretty much over, till my daughters grew up, who being all tolerably good singers, plagued me for words to some of their favourite tunes, and so extorted those effusions which

have made a public appearance beyond my expectations, and contrary to my intentions,—at the same time that I hope there is nothing to be found in them uncharacteristic, or unbecoming the cloth, which I would always wish to see respected. As to the assistance you propose from me in the undertaking you are engaged in, I am sorry I cannot give it so far as I could wish, and you perhaps expect. My daughters, who were my only intelligencers, are all *foris-familiate*, and the old woman, their mother, has lost that taste. There are two from my own pen, which I might give you, if worth the while: One to the old Scotch tune of “*Dumbarton’s drums.*” The other, perhaps, you have met with, as your noble friend the Duchess has, I am told, heard of it. It was squeezed out of me by a brother parson in her neighbourhood, to accommodate a new highland reel for the Marquis’s birth-day, to the stanza of.

“Tune your fiddles, tune them sweetly,” &c.

If this last answer your purpose, you may have it from a brother of mine, Mr James Skinner, writer in Edinburgh, who, I believe, can give the music too. There is another humorous thing, I have heard, said to be done by the Catholic priest Geddes, and which hit my taste much.

“There was a wee wifeikie was comin frae the fair,
 “Had gotten a little drapikie, which bred her meikil
 care ;

“ It took upo’ the wifie’s heart, and she began to spew,
 “ And co’ the wee wifeikie I wish I binna fou.
 “ I wish,” &c.

I have heard of another new composition by a young plowman of my acquaintance, that I am vastly pleased with, to the tune of the “ *Humours of Glen,*” which, I fear, wont do, as the music, I am told, is of Irish original. I have mentioned these, such as they are, to shew my readiness to oblige you, and to contribute my mite, if I could, to the patriotic work you have in hand, and which I wish all success to. You have only to notify your mind, and what you want of the above shall be sent you. Meantime, while you are thus publicly, I may say, employed, do not sheath your own proper and piercing weapon. From what I have seen of yours already, I am inclined to hope for much good. One lesson of virtue and morality delivered in your amusing style, and from such as you, will operate more than dozens would do from such as me, who shall be told, it is our employment, and be never more minded; whereas, from a pen like yours, as being one of the many, what comes will be admired:—Admiration will produce regard, and regard will leave an impression, especially when *example goes along*.

“ Now binna saying I’m ill bred,
 Else by my troth I’ll no be glad;
 For cadgers ye ha’e heard it said,
 And sic like fry,
 Maun ay be harlin in their trade,
 And sae maun I.

Wishing you, from my poet-pen, all success, and in my other character, all happiness and heavenly direction, I remain, with esteem, your sincere friend,

JOHN SKINNER."

The next letter from Burns to our Author, is dated at Edinburgh the 14th of February 1788, and the following is a copy of it :

" Reverend and dear Sir,

" I have been a cripple now near three months, though I am getting vastly better, and have been very much hurried beside, or else I would have wrote you sooner. I must beg your pardon for the epistle you sent me appearing in the Magazine. I had given a copy or two to some of my intimate friends, but did not know of the printing of it till the publication of the magazine. However, as it does great honour to us both, I hope you will forgive it. The second volume of the songs I mentioned to you in my last, is published to-day. I send you a copy, which I beg you will accept as a mark of the veneration I have long had, and shall ever have, for your character, and of the claim I make to your continued acquaintance. Your songs appear in the third volume, with your name in the index, as I assure you, Sir, I have heard your *Tullochgorum*, particularly among our west country folks, given to many different names, and most commonly to the immortal Author of the *Minstrel*, who, indeed, never wrote any thing superior to "*Gie's a Sang Montgomery cried.*" Your brother has promised me your verses

to the Marquis of Huntly's reel, which certainly deserve a place in the Collection. My kind host, Mr Cruickshank, of the High School here, and said to be one of the best Latins in this age, begs me to make you his grateful acknowledgments for the entertainment he has got in a Latin publication of yours that I borrowed for him from your acquaintance, and my much respected friend, in this place, the reverend Dr Webster. Mr Cruickshank maintains that you write the best Latin since Buchanan. "I leave Edinburgh to-morrow, but shall return in three weeks. Your song you mentioned in your last, to the tune of "*Dumbarton Drums*," and the other, which you say was done by a brother by trade of mine, a plowman, I shall thank you much for a copy of each. I am ever, reverend Sir, with the most respectful esteem, and sincere veneration, yours,

ROBERT BURNS."

To this letter our Author sent the following reply :

" Dear Sir, *Linshart 28th April 1788.*

" I received your last with the curious present you have favoured me with, and would have made proper acknowledgements before now, but that I have been necessarily engaged in matters of a different complexion. And now that I have got a little respite, I make use of it to thank you for this valuable instance of your good-will, and to assure you, that, with the sincere heart of a true Scotsman, I highly esteem both the gift and the giver ;—as a small

testimony of which I have herewith sent you, for your amusement, (and in a form which I hope you will excuse, for saving postage) the two songs I wrote about to you already. *Charming Nancy* is the real production of genius in a plowman of twenty years of age at the time of its appearing, with no more education than what he picked up at an old farmer grandfather's fire-side. And I doubt not, but you will find in it, a simplicity and delicacy, with some turns of humour, that will please one of your taste, at least it pleased me when I first saw it, if that can be any recommendation to it. The other* is entirely descriptive of my own sentiments, and you may make use of one or both, as you shall see good. You will oblige me by presenting my respects to your host, Mr Cruickshank, who has given such high approbation to my poor *Latinity*:— You may let him know, that as I have likewise been a dabbler in Latin poetry, I have two things that I would, if he desires it, submit, not to his judgment, but to his amusement; the one, a translation of *Chryste-Kirk o' the Green*, printed at Aberdeen some years ago; the other *Batrachomyomachia Homeri latinis vestita cum additamentis*, given in lately to Chalmers to print, if he pleases. Mr C. will know, "*Seria non semper delectant, non joca semper. Semper delectant seria mixta jocis.*" I

* See *The Old-man's Song*,---Tune, "Dumbarton's Drums," in this collection.

have just room to repeat compliments and good wishes from, Sir, your humble servant,

JOHN SKINNER."

In what Burns used to call the "manufacturing of "his verses," the first rough sketch of them was the easy work of his fertile imagination, while following the plough, or engaged in any other of his rural employments. In that state his memory retained them, till an opportunity offered for committing them to paper, when he acknowledges, that the work of the file, in giving them the finishing polish, was often the greatest labour that attended the production of them. Now, this was a task to which the Author of the following little pieces never felt the smallest inclination to submit. His poetical effusions were committed to writing just in the form which his fancy originally gave them, and when once dismissed from his thoughts, were never called back to receive any sort of correction or improvement. The dress in which they first appeared from his pen, was that in which they were destined to make their way, as far as the circle of his acquaintance extended. Any attempt to change their appearance, our Author would have deemed a needless waste of time and trouble. Poetry of every species was by him considered as a mere amusement, in which he was sometimes willing to relax from severer studies. Though some of his productions, especially in Latin verse, have been much admired by very competent judges of their merit, it could not be said, that their Author wished to rest on such things any part of his posthumous fame, had he

ever harboured a wish for fame of that sort. But to what is considered as posthumous fame, he was wholly indifferent. The great object of his ambition was to employ the talents with which God had endowed him, in the faithful discharge of the duties of a Christian pastor: and if these duties could be discharged by exhibiting an example of unaffected piety, and active virtue, by being “instant in season, and out of season,” and by never “shunning to declare” to those of whom he had the pastoral care, “all the counsel of God,” the object of Mr Skinner’s ambition was undoubtedly obtained. Should any farther testimony be required to the truth of this observation, it will be found in the account given of his character, as displayed in the Monumental Inscription, which has been already mentioned. Of this Inscription the following is a copy taken from the Marble, on which it is beautifully engraved.

יהוה

GLORY TO GOD ALONE !

SACRED TO THE MEMORY OF
 THE REV^D. JOHN SKINNER,
 FOR LXIV. YEARS AND UPWARDS
 EPISCOPAL CLERGYMAN IN THIS PARISH ;
 WHOSE ATTAINMENTS AS A SCHOLAR,
 AND SCRIPTURAL RESEARCH AS A DIVINE,
 OF WHICH MANY WRITTEN DOCUMENTS REMAIN,
 ACQUIRED HIM A NAME
 NEVER TO BE FORGOTTEN IN THE CHURCH
 IN WHICH HE EXERCISED HIS MINISTRY ;
 WHILE HIS PASTORAL LABOURS IN THE CHARGE
 COMMITTED TO HIM
 ENDEARED HIM, ALMOST BEYOND EXAMPLE,
 TO THE SORROWING FLOCK, BY WHOM,
 IN TESTIMONY OF THEIR HEARTFELT REGARD,
 THIS MONUMENT
 IS
 ERECTED.

ON THE XVth DAY OF JUNE 1807, AGED LXXXVI
 YEARS,
 HE SLEPT THE SLEEP OF DEATH, IN THE ARMS OF
 THE RIGHT REV. JOHN SKINNER,
 BISHOP OF THE DIOCESE OF ABERDEEN, HIS ONLY
 SURVIVING SON ;
 WHO, WITH HIS FAMILY AND OTHER NUMEROUS
 DESCENDANTS,
 SHALL NEVER CEASE TO FEEL THE MOST DEVOUT
 AND LIVELY VENERATION FOR THE TALENTS, THE
 ACQUIREMENTS,
 AND CHARACTER OF A PROGENITOR,
 WHO LIVED
 SO JUSTLY RESPECTED,
 AND DIED
 SO SINCERELY LAMENTED.

THE
MONYMUSK
CHRISTMAS BA'ING.

THE NEW YORK

CHRISTMAS

THE

MONYMUSK

CHRISTMAS BA'ING.

I.

HAS ne'er in a' this countra been,
 Sic shoudering and sic fa'ing,
 As happen'd but few ouks sinsyne,
 Here at the Christmas Ba'ing.
 At evening syne the fallows keen
 Drank till the niest day's dawing,
 Sae snell, that some tint baith their een,
 And could na pay their lawing,
 Till the niest day.

II.

Like bumbees bizzing frae a byke,
 Whan hirds their riggins tirr ;
 The swankies lap thro' mire and syke,
 Wow as their heads did birr !
 They yowff'd the ba' frae dyke to dyke
 Wi' unco speed and virr ;
 Some baith their shou'ders up did fyke,
 For blythness some did flirr
 Their teeth that day.

III.

Rob Roy, I wat he was na dull,
 He first leit at the ba',
 Syne wi' a rap clash'd Geordie's scull
 Hard to the steeple wa'.
 Wha was aside but auld Tam Tull ;
 His frien's mishap he saw,—
 Syne rair'd like ony baited bull,
 And wi' a thud dang twa
 To th' yird that day.

IV.

The tanner was a primpit bit,
 As flimsy as a feather,
 He thought it best to try a hit,
 Ere a' the thrang shou'd gadyr :
 He ran wi' neither fear nor wit,
 As fu' o' wind's a bladder ;
 Unluckily he tint the fit,
 And tann'd his ain bum-lether,
 Fell weel that day.

V.

Syne Francie Winsy steppit in,
 A sauchin slivery slype,
 Ran forrat wi' a furious din,
 And drew a swinging swype.
 But Tammy Norie thought nae sin
 To come o'er him wi' a snype,
 Levell'd his nose flat wi' s chin,
 And gart his swall'd een sype,
 Sawt tears that day.

VI.

Bockin red bleed the fleep mair caum,
 Ran hame to his nain mammy :
 “ Alas ! ” co’ Katie, when she saw him,
 “ Wha did you this, my lammie ? ”
 “ A meikle man, ” co’ he, “ foul faw him, ”
 But wad na sae ’twas Tammie,
 “ Rax’d me alang the chafts a wham
 “ As soon as e’er he saw me,
 “ And made me blae.”

VII.

“ Deil rax his chandler chafts, ” co’ Kate,
 “ For doing you sic wrang,
 “ Gin I had here the skypel skate,
 “ Sae weel’s I shou’d him bang ! ”
 The gilpy stood, and leuk’t fell blate,
 To see her in sic a sang ;
 He squeel’d to her, like a young gyte,
 But wad na mird to gang
 Back a’ that day.

VIII.

The hurry-burry now began,
 Was right weel worth the seeing,
 Wi’ routs and raps frae man to man,
 Some getting, and some gieing ;
 And a’ the tricks of fit and hand,
 That ever was in being ;
 Sometimes the ba’ a yirdlins ran,
 Sometimes in air was fleeing,
 Fu’ heigh that day.

IX.

Stout Steen gart mony a fallow stoit,
 And flang them o'er like fail;
 Said, "he'd na care ae clippit doit,
 "Tho' a' should turn their tail."
 But wi' a yark Gib made his queet
 As dwabil as a flail,
 And o'er fell he, maist like to greet,
 Just at the eemest ga'ill,
 O' the kirk that day.

X.

The sutor like tod-lowrie lap,
 Three fit at ilka stend:
 He did na miss the ba' a chap,
 Ilk ane did him commend.
 But a lang try pall there was Snap,
 Cam' on him wi' a bend;
 Gart him, ere ever he wist, cry clap
 Upon his nether end;
 And there he lay.

XI.

Sanny soon saw the sutor slain,
 He was his ain hawf-brither;
 I wat right well he was fu' brain,
 And fu' could he be ither?
 He heez'd in ire a puttin-stane,
 Twa fell on him thegither,
 Wi' a firm gowff he fell'd the tane,
 But wi' a gowff the tither
 Fell'd him that day.

XII.

In came the insett Dominie,
 Just riftin frae his dinner,
 A young mess John, as ane cou'd see,
 Was neither saint nor sinner.
 A brattlin band, unhappily,
 Drave by him wi' a binner,
 And heels-o'er-goudie coupit he,
 And rave his guid horn penner
 In bits that day.

XIII.

Leitch lent the ba' a loundrin lick,
 She flew fast like a flain;
 Syne lighted whare faes were maist thick,
 Gart ae gruff Grunsie grain.
 He whippit up a rotten stick,
 I wat he was na fain,
 Leitch wi's fit gae 'im sic a kick,
 Till they a' thought him slain,
 That very day.

XIV.

There was nane there could Cowlie byde,
 The gryte guidman, nor nane,
 He stenn'd bawk-height at ilka stride,
 And rampag'd o'er the green:
 For the kirk-yard was braid and wide,
 And o'er a knablick stane,
 He rumbl'd down a rammage glyde,
 And peel'd the gardy-bane
 O' him that day.

XV.

His cousin was a bierly swank,
 A derf young man, hecht Rob ;
 To mell wi' twa he wad na mank
 At staffy-nevel job :
 I wat na fu, but on a bank,
 Whare gadder'd was the mob,
 The cousins bicker'd wi' a clank,
 Gart ane anither sob,
 And gasp that day.

XVI.

Tho' Rob was stout, his cousin dang
 Him down wi' a gryte shudder ;
 Syne a' the drochlin hèmpy thrang
 Gat o'er him wi' a fudder ;
 Gin he should rise, and hame o'ergang,
 Lang was he in a swither ;
 For bleed frae's mou' and niz did bang,
 And in gryte burns did bludder
 His face that day.

XVII.

But, waes my heart, for Petrie Gib,
 The carlie's head 'twas scaw't,
 Upo' the crown he got a skib,
 That gart him yowll and claw't.
 Sae he wad slip his wa' to Tib,
 And spy at hame some fawt ;
 I thought he might hae gott'n a snib,
 Sae thought ilk ane that saw't,
 O' th' green that day.

XVIII.

But taylor Hutchin met him there,
 A curst unhappy spark,
 Saw Pate had caught a camshack cair
 At this uncanny wark.
 He bade na lang to seek his lare,
 But, wi' a yawfu' yark,
 Whare Pate's right spawl, by hap, was bare,
 He derfly dang the bark
 Frae's shins that day.

XIX.

Poor Petrie gae a weary winch,
 He could na do but bann ;
 The taylor baith his sides did pinch,
 Wi' laughing out o' hand ;
 He jee'd na out o' that an inch,
 Afore a menseless man,
 Came a' at aunes athort his hinch,
 A sowff, and gart him prann
 His bum that day.

XX.

The Priest's hireman, a chiel as stark
 As ony giant cou'd be,
 He kent afore o' this day's wark,
 For certain that it would be.
 He ween'd to drive in o'er the park,
 And ilk ane thought it should be ;
 Whether his foot had mist its mark,
 I canna tell, but fou't be,
 He fell that day.

XXI.

'Ere he cou'd change th' uncanny lair,
 And nae help to be gi'en him,
 There tumbled a mischievous pair
 O' mawten'd lolls aboon him.
 It wad ha made your heart fu' sair,
 Gin ye had only seen him;
 An't had na been for Davy Mair,
 The rascals had ondune him,
 Belyve that day.

XXII.

Cry'd black Pate Mill, "God save the King!"
 Cry'd gley'd Gib Gun, "God grant it;"
 Syne to the ba' like ony thing,
 Baith ran, and baith loud vauntit,
 But auld James Stuart drew his sting,
 Tauld them they could na want it;
 He sware he'd gar their harnpans ring
 Till black Pate Mill maist fantit,
 For fear that day.

XXIII.

A stranger bra', in Highland claise,
 Leit mony a sturdy aith,
 To bear the ba' thro' a' his faes,
 And nae kep meikle skaith.
 Rob Roy heard the fricksome fraise,
 Weel girded in his graith;
 Gowff'd him along the shins a blaize,
 And gart him tyne his faith
 And feet that day.

XXIV.

His neiper was a man o' might,
 Was few there could ha' quell'd him,
 He did na see the dreary sight,
 Till some yap gilpy tell'd him.
 To Robin syne he flew outright,
 As he'd been gaun' to geld him ;
 But, dolesu' chance, frae some curst wight,
 A clammy-houit fell'd him
 Hawf dead that day.

XXV.

The millart's man, a suple fallow,
 Ran 's he had been red wud ;
 He fethir'd fiercely like a swallow,
 Cry'd, hech ! at ilka thud.
 A gawsie gurk, wi' phiz o' yellow,
 In youthood's sappy bud,
 Nae twa there wad ha gart him wallow,
 Wi' fair play i' the mud
 On's back that day.

XXVI.

Tam Tull upon him cuist his ee,
 Saw him sae mony fuilzie ;
 He green'd again some play to prec,
 And raise anither bruilzie.
 Up the kirk-yard he fast did jee,
 I wat he was na hoilie,
 And a' the kenzie glowr'd to see
 A bonny kind o' tuilzie
 Atween them twa.

XXVII.

The millart never notic'd Tam,
 Sae browden'd he the ba',
 He rumbl'd rudely like a ram,
 Dang o'er whiles ane, whiles twa.
 His enemy in afore him cam,
 Ere ever he him saw ;
 Raught him a rap on the forestam,
 But had na time to draw
 Anither sae.

XXVIII.

Afore he could step three inch back,
 The millart drew a knife,
 A curst-like gullie and a snack,
 Some blacksmith's wark in Fife.
 The lave their thumbs did blythly knock,
 To see the stalwart strife ;
 But Tam, I ken, wad gien a plack
 T' hae been safe wi' his wife,
 At hame that day.

XXIX.

The parish-clark came up the yard,
 A man fu' meek o' mind ;
 Right jinch he was, and fell weel-fawr'd,
 His claithing was fu' fine.
 Just whare their feet the dubs had glawr'd,
 And barken'd them like bryne,
 Gley'd Gibby Gun wi' a derf dawrd,
 Best o'er the grave divine
 On's bum that day.

XXX.

When a' were pitying his mishap,
 And swarm'd about the clark,
 Wi' whittles some his hat did scrap,
 Some dighted down his sark.
 Will Winter gae the ba' a chap,
 He ween'd he did a wark,
 While Sanny wi' a weel-wyl'd wap,
 Youff'd her in o'er the park
 A space and mair.

XXXI.

Wi' that Rob Roy gae a rair,
 A rierfu' rout rais'd he,
 'Twas heard, they said, three mile and mair,
 Wha likes may credit gie.
 I wyte his heart was fu' o' care,
 And knell'd fell sair to see,
 The cleverest callant that was there,
 Play himsel' sic a slee
 Begeck that day.

XXXII.

Jock Jalop shouted like a gun,
 As something had him ail'd :
 'Fy, Sirs, co' he, the ba' spel's won,
 And we the ba' ha'e hail'd.
 Some green'd for hawf an hour's mair fun,
 'Cause fresh, and nae sair fail'd :
 Ithers did Sanny gryte thanks cunn,
 And thro' their baffats trail'd
 Their nails that day.

XXXIII.

Syne a' consented to be frien's,
 And lap like sucking fillies :
 Some red their hair, some maen'd their banes,
 Some bann'd the bensome billies.
 The pensy blades doss'd down on stanes,
 Whipt out their snishin millies ;
 And a' ware blyth to tak their einds,
 And club a pint o' Lillie's
 Best ale that day.

XXXIV.

Has ne'er in Monymuss been seen
 Sae mony weel-beft skins :
 Of a' the bawmen there was nane
 But had twa bloody shins.
 Wi' strenzied shouders mony ane
 Dree'd penance for their sins ;
 And what was warst, scoup'd hame at ee'n,
 May be to hungry inns,
 And cauld that day.

SONGS, EPISTLES, ELEGIES,

&c. &c.

SONGS, PRISTINE, IN EDITION

TULLOCHGORUM.

In that part of the RELIQUES OF BURNS, lately published by R. H. Cromek, entitled "Strictures on Scottish Songs and Ballads," &c. is the following Account of TULLOCHGORUM.

*"This first of Songs, is the master-piece of my
 "old friend SKINNER. He was passing the
 "day at the town of Cullen, I think it was,
 " [should have said Ellon] in a friend's house,
 "whose name was Montgomery. Mrs Mont-
 "gomery observing, en passant, that the beauti-
 "ful reel of Tullochgorum wanted words, she
 "begged them of Mr Skinner, who gratified
 "her wishes, and the wishes of every lover of
 "Scottish song, in this most excellent ballad."*

I.

COME gie's a sang, Montgomery cry'd,
 And lay your disputes all aside,
 What signifies't for folks to chide
 For what was done before them :
 Let Whig and Tory all agree,
 Whig and Tory, Whig and Tory,
 Whig and Tory all agree,
 To drop their Whig-mig-morum ;

Let Whig and Tory all agree
 To spend the night wi' mirth and glee,
 And cheerful sing along wi' me
 The Reel o' Tullochgorum.

II.

O' Tullochgorum's my delight,
 It gars us a' in ane unite,
 And ony sumph that keeps a spite,
 In conscience I abhor him :
 For blythe and cheerie we'll be a',
 Blythe and cheerie, blythe and cheerie,
 Blythe and cheerie we'll be a',
 And make a happy quorum,
 For blythe and cheerie we'll be a'
 As lang as we hae breath to draw,
 And dance till we be like to fa'
 The Reel o' Tullochgorum.

III.

What needs there be sae great a fraise
 Wi' dringing dull Italian lays,
 I wadna gie our ain Strathspeys
 For half a hunder score o' them ;
 They're dowf and dowie at the best,
 Dowf and dowie, dowf and dowie,
 Dowf and dowie at the best,
 Wi' a' their variorum ;
 They're dowf and dowie at the best,
 Their *allegros* and a' the rest,
 They canna' please a Scottish taste
 Compar'd wi' Tullochgorum.

IV.

Let warldly worms their minds oppress
 Wi' fears o' want and double cess,
 And sullen sots themsells distress

Wi' keeping up decorum :

Shall we sae sour and sulky sit,
 Sour and sulky, sour and sulky,
 Sour and sulky shall we sit

Like old philosophorum !

Shall we sae sour and sulky sit,
 Wi' neither sense, nor mirth, nor wit,
 Nor ever try to shake a fit

To th' Reel o' Tullochgorum ?

V.

May choicest blessings ay attend
 Each honest, open hearted friend,
 And calm and quiet be his end,

And a' that's good watch o'er him ;

May peace and plenty be his lot,
 Peace and plenty, peace and plenty,
 Peace and plenty be his lot,

And dainties a great store o' them ;

May peace and plenty be his lot,
 Unstain'd by any vicious spot,
 And may he never want a groat,

That's fond o' Tullochgorum !

VI.

But for the sullen frumpish fool,
 That loves to be oppression's tool,
 May envy gnaw his rotten soul,
 And discontent devour him ;
 May dool and sorrow be his chance,
 Dool and sorrow, dool and sorrow.
 Dool and sorrow be his chance,
 And nane say, wae's me for him !
 May dool and sorrow be his chance,
 Wi' a' the ills that come frae *France*,
 Wha e'er he be that winna dance
 The Reel o' Tullochgorum.

JOHN O' BADENYON.

*"This excellent song," says BURNS, "is the
"composition of my worthy friend old SKINNER
"at Linshart."*

I.

When first I cam to be a man
Of twenty years or so,
I thought myself a handsome youth;
And fain the world would know;
In best attire I stept abroad,
With spirits brisk and gay,
And here and there and every where
Was like a morn in May;
No care I had nor fear of want,
But rambled up and down,
And for a beau I might have past
In country or in town;
I still was pleas'd where'er I went,
And when I was alone,
I tun'd my pipe and pleas'd myself
Wi' John o' Badenyon,

II.

Now in the days of youthful prime
 A mistress I must find,
 For *love*, I heard, gave one an air
 And ev'n improv'd the mind :
 On Phillis fair above the rest
 Kind fortune fixt my eyes,
 Her piercing beauty struck my heart,
 And she became my choice ;
 To Cupid now with hearty prayer
 I offer'd many a vow ;
 And danc'd and sung, and sigh'd, and swore,
 As other lovers do ;
 But, when at last I breath'd my flame,
 I found her cold as stone ;
 I left the girl, and tun'd my pipe
 To John o' Badenyon.

III.

When *love* had thus my heart beguil'd
 With foolish hopes and vain ;
 To *friendship's* port I steer'd my course,
 And laugh'd at lovers' pain ;
 A friend I got by lucky chance,
 'Twas something like divine,
 An honest friend 's a precious gift,
 And such a gift was mine ;
 And now whatever might betide
 A happy man was I,
 In any strait I knew to whom
 I freely might apply ;

A strait soon came : my friend I try'd ;
 He heard, and spurn'd my moan ;
 I hy'd me home, and tun'd my pipe
 To John o' Badenyon.

IV.

Methought I should be wiser next
 And would a *patriot* turn,
 Began to doat on Johnny Wilkes
 And cry up Parson Horne *.
 Their manly spirit I admir'd,
 And prais'd their noble zeal,
 Who had with flaming tongue and pen
 Maintain'd the public weal ;
 But e'er a month or two had past,
 I found myself betray'd,
 'Twas *self* and *party* after all,
 For a' the stir they made ;
 At last I saw the factious knaves
 Insult the very throne,
 I curs'd them a', and tun'd my pipe
 To John o' Badenyon.

V.

What next to do I mus'd a while,
 Still hoping to succeed,
 I pitch'd on *books* for company
 And gravely try'd to read :

* This song was composed when Wilkes, Horne, &c. were making a noise about liberty.

I bought and borrowed every where
 And study'd night and day,
 Nor mist what dean or doctor wrote
 That happen'd in my way :
 Philosophy I now esteem'd
 The ornament of youth,
 And carefully through many a page
 I hunted after truth.
 A thousand various schemes I try'd,
 And yet was pleas'd with none,
 I threw them by, and tun'd my pipe
 To John o' Badenyon.

VI.

And now ye youngsters every where,
 That wish to make a show,
 Take heed in time, nor fondly hope
 For happiness below ;
 What you may fancy pleasure here,
 Is but an empty name,
 And *girls*, and *friends*, and *books*, and so,
 You'll find them all the same ;
 Then be advised and warning take
 From such a man as me ;
 I'm neither Pope nor Cardinal,
 Nor one of high degree ;
 You'll meet displeasure every where ;
 Then do as I have done,
 Ev'n tune your pipe and please yourselves
 With John o' Badenyon.

THE

EWIE WI' THE CROOKIT HORN.

I.

WERE I but able to rehearse
 My Ewie's praise in proper verse,
 I'd sound it forth as loud and fierce
 As ever piper's drone could blaw ;
 The Ewie wi' the crookit horn,
 Wha had kent her might hae sworn
 Sic a Ewe was never born,
 Hereabout nor far awa',
 Sic a Ewe was never born,
 Hereabout nor far awa'.

II.

I never needed tar nor keil
 To mark her upo' hip or heel,
 Her crookit horn did as weel
 To ken her by amò' them a' ;
 She never threaten'd scab nor rot,
 But keepit ay her ain jog-trot,
 Baith to the fauld and to the cot,
 Was never sweir to lead nor caw,
 Baith to the fauld and to the cot, &c.

III.

Could nor hunger never dang her,
 Wind nor wet could never wrang her,
 Anes she lay an ouk and langer

Furth aneath a wreath o' snaw :

Whan ither Ewies lap the dyke,
 And eat the kail for a' the tyke,
 My Ewie never play'd the like,

But tyc'd about the barn wa' ;

My Ewie never play'd the like, &c.

IV.

A better or a thriftier beast,
 Nae honest man could weel hae wist,
 For silly thing she never mist,

To hae ilk' year a lamb or twa' ;

The first she had I gae to Jock,
 To be to him a kind o' stock,
 And now the laddie has a flock

O' mair nor thirty head awa' ;

And now the laddie has a flock, &c.

V.

I lookit aye at even' for her,
 Lest mishanter shou'd come o'er her,
 Or the fowmart might devour her,

Gin the beastie bade awa ;

My Ewie wi' the crookit horn,
 Well deserv'd baith girse and corn,
 Sic a Ewe was never born,

Here-about nor far awa.

Sic a Ewe was never born, &c.

VI.

Yet last ouk, for a' my keeping,
(Wha can speak it without *greeting*?)

A villain cam when I was sleeping,

Sta' my Ewie, horn and a' :

I sought her sair upo' the morn,

And down aneath a buss o' thorn

I got my Ewie's crookit horn,

But my Ewie was awa'.

I got my Ewie's crookit horn, &c.

VII.

O ! gin I had the loun that did it,

Sworn I have as well as said it,

Tho' a' the warld should forbid it,

I wad gie his neck a thra' :

I never met wi' sic a turn,

As this sin ever I was born,

My Ewie wi' the crookit horn,

Silly Ewie stown awa',

My Ewie wi' the crookit horn, &c.

VIII.

O ! had she died o' crook or cauld,

As Ewies do when they grow auld,

It wad na been, by mony fauld,

Sae sair a heart to nane o's a' :

For a' the claith that we hae worn,

Frae her and her's sae aften shorn,

The loss o' her we cou'd hae born,

Had fair strae-death ta'en her awa'.

The loss o' her we cou'd hae born, &c.

IX.

But thus, poor thing, to lose her life,
Aneath a bleedy villain's knife,

I'm really fley't that our guidwife

Will never win aboon't ava :

O ! a' ye bards benorth Kinghorn,

Call your muses up and mourn,

Our Ewie wi' the crookit horn,

Stown frae 's, and felt and a' !

Our Ewie wi' the crookit horn, &c.

II.

Lay aside your sour grimaces,
 Clouded brows, and drumly faces,
 Look about, and see their GRACES,
 How they smile delighted;
 Now 's the season to be merry,
 Hang the thoughts of Charon's ferry,
 Time enough to turn camsterry
 When we're auld and doited.
 Now's the season, &c.

III.

Butler, put about the claret,
 Thro' us a' divide and share it,
 Gordon-Castle well can spare it,
 It has claret plenty.
 Wine 's the true inspiring liquor,
 Draffy drink may please the Vicar,
 When he grasps the foaming bicker,
 Vicars are not dainty.
 Wine 's the true inspiring liquor, &c.

IV.

We'll extoll our noble MASTER,
 Sprung from many a brave ancestor,—
 Heaven preserve him from disaster,
 So we pray in duty.
 Prosper, too, our pretty DUCHESS,
 Safe from all distressful touches,
 Keep her out of Pluto's clutches,
 Long in health and beauty.
 Prosper, too, our pretty Duchess, &c.

V.

Angels guard their gallant boy,
 Make him long his father's joy,
 Sturdy, like the heir of Troy,
 Stout and brisk and healthy.
 Pallas, grant him every blessing,
 Wit and strength and size increasing,
 Plutus, what's in thy possessing,
 Make him rich and wealthy.
 Pallas, grant him every blessing, &c.

VI.

Youth, solace him with thy pleasure,
 In refin'd and worthy measure ;
 Merit, gain him choicest treasure,
 From the Royal donor.
 Famous may he be in story,
 Full of days, and full of glory ;
 To the grave, when old and hoary,
 May he go with honour !
 Famous may he be in story, &c.

VII.

GORDONS, join our hearty praises,
 Honest, though in homely phrases,
 Love our cheerful spirits raises,
 Lofty as the lark is :
 Echo, waft our wishes daily,
 Thro' the grove, and thro' the alley,
 Sound o'er every hill and valley,
 Blessings on our Marquis
 Echo, waft our wishes daily, &c.

THE
OLD MAN'S SONG.

TUNE—DUMBARTON DRUMS.

I.

O ! why should old age so much wound us ! *
There is nothing in it all to confound us :
 For how happy now am I,
 With my old wife sitting by ;
And our bairns and our oys all around us ;
 For how happy now am I, &c.

II.

We began in the world wi' naething,
And we've jogg'd on, and toil'd for the ae thing ;
 We made use of what we had,
 And our thankful hearts were glad ;
When we got the bit meat and the claithing,
 We made use of what we had, &c.

* This Tune requires O to be added at the end of each of the long lines, but in reading the Song the O is better omitted.

III.

We have liv'd all our life-time contented,
 Since the day we became first acquainted :
 It's true we've been but poor,
 And we are so to this hour ;
 But we never yet repin'd or lamented.
 It's true we've been but poor, &c.

IV.

When we had any stock, we ne'er vauntit,
 Nor did we hing our heads when we wantit ;
 But we always gave a share
 Of the little we cou'd spare,
 When it pleas'd a kind Heaven to grant it:
 But we always gave a share, &c.

V.

We never laid a scheme to be wealthy,
 By means that were cunning or stealthy ;
 But we always had the bliss,
 And what further could we wiss,
 To be pleas'd with ourselves, and be healthy.
 But we always had the bliss, &c.

VI.

What tho' we cannot boast of our guineas,
 We have plenty of Jockies and Jeanies ;
 And these, I 'm certain, are
 More desirable by far
 Than a bag full of poor yellow steinies.
 And these, I am certain, are, &c.

VII.

We have seen many wonder and ferly,
 Of changes that almost are yearly,
 Among rich folks up and down,
 Both in country and in town,
 Who now live but scrimply and barely.
 Among rich folks up and down, &c.

VIII.

Then why should people brag of prosperity?
 A straiten'd life we see is no rarity;
 Indeed we've been in want,
 And our living's been but scant,
 Yet we never were reduced to need charity.
 Indeed we've been in want, &c.

IX.

In this house we first came together,
 Where we've long been a father and mither;
 And tho' not of stone and lime,
 It will last us all our time;
 And, I hope, we shall ne'er need anither.
 And tho' not of stone and lime, &c.

X.

And when we leave this poor habitation,
 We'll depart with a good commendation;
 We'll go hand in hand, I wiss,
 To a better house than this,
 To make room for the next generation.
 We'll go hand in hand, I wiss, &c.
Then why should old age so much wound us, &c.

STILL IN THE WRONG.

TO ITS OWN TUNE.

I.

It has long been my fate to be thought in the *wrong*,
 And my fate it continues to be ;
 The wise and the wealthy still make it their song,
 And the clerk and the cottar agree.
 There is nothing I do, and there's nothing I say,
 But some one or other thinks wrong ;
 And to please them I find there is no other way,
 But do nothing, and still hold my tongue.

II.

Says the free-thinking *Sophist*, " The times are refin'd
 " In sense to a wondrous degree ;
 " Your old fashion'd faith does but fetter the mind,
 " And it's *wrong* not to seek to be free."
 Says the sage *Politician*, " Your natural share
 " Of talents would raise you much higher,
 " Than thus to crawl on in your present low sphere,
 " And it's *wrong* in you not to aspire."

III.

Says the *Man* of the *World*, “ Your dull stoic life

“ Is surely deserving of blame ?

“ You have children to care for, as well as a wife,

“ And it's wrong not to lay up for them.”

Says the fat *Gormandizer*, “ To eat and to drink

“ Is the true *summum bonum* of man :

“ Life is nothing without it, whate'er you may think,

“ And its *wrong* not to live while you can.”

IV.

Says the new made *Divine*, “ Your old modes we reject,

“ Nor give ourselves trouble about them :

“ It is manners and dress that procure us respect,

“ And it's *wrong* to look for it without them.”

Says the grave *peevish Saint*, in a fit of the spleen,

“ Ah ! me, but your manners are vile :

“ A parson that's *blythe* is a shame to be seen,

“ And it's *wrong* in you even to smile.”

V.

Says the *Clown*, when I tell him to do what he ought,

“ Sir, whatever your character be,

“ To obey you in this I will never be brought,

“ And it's *wrong* to be meddling with me.”

Says my *Wife*, when she wants this or that for the house,

“ Our matters to ruin must go :

“ Your reading and writing is not worth a souse,

“ And it's *wrong* to neglect the house so.”

VI.

Thus *all* judge of me by their taste or their wit,
And I'm censur'd by old and by young,
Who in one point agree, though in others they split,
That in something I'm still in the *wrong*.
But let them say on to the end of the song,
It shall make no impression on me :
If to differ from such be to be in the *wrong*,
In the *wrong* I hope always to be.

LIZZY LIBERTY.

TUNE—TIBBIE FOWLER I' THE GLEN.

I.

There lives a lassie i' the braes,
 And Lizzy Liberty they ca' her,
 Whan she has on her Sunday's claes,
 Ye never saw a lady brawer ;
 So a' the lads are wooing at her,
 Courting her but canna get her,
 Bonny Lizzy Liberty, there's ow'r mony wooing at her !

II.

Her mither ware a tabbit mutch,
 Her father was an honest dyker,
 She's a black eyed wanton witch,
 Ye winna shaw me mony like her,
 So a' the lads are wooing at her,
 Courting her but canna get her,
 Bonny Lizzie Liberty, wow so mony 's wooing at her !

III.

A kindly lass she is, I'm seer,
 Has fowth o' sense and smeddum in her,
 And nae a swankie far nor near.
 But tries wi' a' his might to win her :

They're wooing at her, fain would hae her,
 Courting her but canna get her,
 Bonnie Lizzy Liberty, there's ow'r mony wooing at her.

IV.

For kindly tho' she be nae doubt,
 She manna thole the marriage-tether,
 But likes to rove and rink about,
 Like highland cowt amo' the heather :
 Yet a' the lads are wooing at her,
 Courting her but canna get her,
 Bonny Lizzy Liberty, wow, sae mony's wooing at her.

V.

It's seven year, and some guid mair,
 Syn *Dutch Mynheer* made courtship till her,
 A merchant bluff and fu' o' care,
 Wi' chuffy cheeks, and bags o' siller ;
 So Dutch Mynheer was wooing at her,
 Courting her but cudna get her,
 Bonny Lizzy Liberty, has ow'r mony wooing at her.

VI.

Neist to him came *Baltic John*,
 Stept up the brae, and leukit at her,
 Syne wear his wa wi' heavy moan,
 And in a month or twa forgat her :
 Baltic John was wooing at her,
 Courting her but cudna get her,
 Filthy elf she's nae herself, wi' sae mony wooing at her.

VII.

Syne after him cam *Yankie Doodle*,
 Frae hyne ayont the muckle water;
 Tho' Yankie's nae yet worth a boddle,
 Wi' might and main he would be at her :
 Yankie Doodle's wooing at her,
 Courting her, but canna get her,
 Bonny Lizzy Liberty, wow, sae mony's wooing at her.

VIII.

Now *Monkey French* is in a roar,
 And swears that nane but he sall hae her,
 Tho' he sud wade thro' bluid and gore,
 It's nae the king sall keep him frae her :
 So Monkey French is wooing at her,
 Courting her, but canna get her,
 Bonny Lizzy Liberty has ow'r mony wooing at her.

IX.

For France, nor yet her Flanders frien',
 Need na think that she'll come to them ;
 They've casten aff wi' a' their kin,
 And grace and guid have flown fae them :
 They're wooing at her, fain wad hae her,
 Courting her, but canna get her,
 Bonny Lizzy Liberty, wow, sae mony's wooing at her

X.

A stately chiel, they ca' *John Bull*,
 Is unco thrang and glaikit wi' her ;
 And gin he cud get a' his wull,
 There's nane can say what he wad gi'e her :

Johnny Bull is wooing at her,
 Courting her, but canna get her,
 Filthy Ted, she'll never wed, as lang's sae mony's
 wooing at her.

XI.

Even *Irish Teague*, ayont Belfast,
 Wadna care to speir about her;
 And swears, till he sall breathe his last,
 He'll never happy be without her:
 Irish Teague is wooing at her,
 Courting her, but canna get her,
 Bonny Lizzy Liberty has ow'r mony wooing at her.

XII.

But *Donald Scot's* the happy lad,
 Tho' a' the lave sud try to rate him;
 Whan he steps up the brae sae glad
 She disna ken maist whare to set him:
 Donald Scot is wooing at her,
 Courting her, will may be get her,
 Bonny Lizzy Liberty, wow sae mony's wooing at her.

XII.

Now Donald tak a frien's advice,
 I ken fu' weel ye fain wad hae her,
 As ye are happy, sae be wise,
 And ha'd ye wi' a smackie frae her:
 Ye're wooing at her, fain wad hae her,
 Courting her, will may be get her,
 Bonny Lizzy Liberty, there's ow'r mony wooing at her.

XIV.

Ye're weel, and wat'sna, lad, they're sayin'
Wi' getting leave to dwell aside her ;
And gin ye had her a' your ain,
Ye might na find it mows to guide her.
Ye're wooing at her, fain wad hae her,
Courting her, will may be get her,
Cunning quean, she's ne'er be mine, as lang's sae
mony's wooing at her.

THE STIPENDLESS PARSON.

TUNE,—A COBLER THERE WAS, &c.

I.

How happy a life does the Parson possess,
 Who would be no greater, nor fears to be less ;
 Who depends on his book and his gown for support,
 And derives no preferment from conclave or court,
Derry down, &c.

II.

Without glebe or manse settl'd on him by law,
 No stipend to sue for, nor vic'rage to draw ;
 In discharge of his office he holds him content,
 With a croft and a garden, for which he pays rent.
Derry down, &c.

III.

With a neat little cottage and furniture plain,
 And a spare room to welcome a friend now and then,
 With a good humour'd wife in his fortune to share,
 And ease him at all times of family care.
Derry down, &c.

IV.

With a few of the Fathers, the oldest and best,
 And some modern Extracts pick'd out from the rest,
 With a Bible in Latin, and Hebrew, and Greek,
 To afford him instruction each day of the week.

Derry down, &c.

V.

With a poney to carry him when he has need,
 And a cow to provide him some milk to his bread ;
 With a mug of brown ale when he feels himself for 't,
 And a glass of good whisky in place of red port.

Derry down, &c.

VI.

What children he has, if any are given,
 He thankfully trusts to the kindness of heaven ;
 To religion and virtue he trains them while young,
 And with such a provision he does them no wrong.

Derry down, &c.

VII.

With labour below, and with help from above,
 He cares for his *flock*, and is blest with their love :
 Tho' his living perhaps in the main may be scant,
 He is sure, while *they* have, that he 'll ne'er be in want.

Derry down, &c.

VII.

With no worldly projects nor hurries perplex,
 He sits in his closet and studies his text ;

And while he converses with Moses or Paul,
He envies not bishop, nor dean in his stall.

Derry down, &c.

XI.

Not proud to the poor, nor a slave to the great,
Neither factious in church, nor pragmatic in state,
He keeps himself quiet within his own sphere,
And finds work sufficient in preaching and pray'r.

Derry down, &c.

X.

In what little dealings he's forc'd to transact,
He determines with plainness and candour to act,
And the great point on which his ambition is set,
Is to leave at the last neither riches nor debt.

Derry down, &c.

XI.

Thus calmly he steps thro' the valley of life,
Unencumbered with wealth, and a stranger to strife ;
On the bustlings around him unmov'd he can look,
And at home always pleas'd with his wife and his book.

Derry down, &c.

XII.

And when in old age he drops into the grave,
This humble remembrance he wishes to have ;
' By good men respected, by the evil oft tried,
' Contented he liv'd, and lamented he died !

Derry down, &c.

THE MAN OF ROSS.

TUNE,—MISS ROSS'S REEL.

I.

When fops and fools together prate,
 O'er punch or tea, of this or that,
 What silly poor unmeaning chat
 Does all their talk engross?
 A nobler theme employs my lays,
 And thus my honest voice I raise
 In well deserved strains to praise
 The worthy Man of Ross.

II.

His lofty soul (would it were mine)
 Scorns ev'ry selfish low design,
 And ne'er was known to repine,
 At any earthly loss:
 But still contented, frank, and free,
 In ev'ry state, whate'er it be,
 Serene and stay'd we always see.
 The worthy Man of Ross.

III.

Let misers hug their worldly store,
 And gripe and pinch to make it more ;
 Their gold and silver's shining ore,

He counts it all but dross :

'Tis better treasure he desires ;
 A surer stock his passion fires,
 And mild benevolence inspires

The worthy Man of Ross.

IV.

When want assails the widow's cot,
 Or sickness strikes the poor man's hut,
 When blasting winds or foggy rot

Augment the farmer's loss :

The sufferer straight knows where to go,
 With all his wants and all his woe,
 For glad experience leads him to

The worthy man of Ross.

V.

This man of Ross I'll daily sing,
 With vocal note and lyric string,
 And duly, when I've drank the king,

He'll be my second toss.

May heaven its choicest blessings send,
 On such a man, and such a friend ;
 And still may all that's good attend

The worthy Man of Ross.

VI.

Now if you ask about his name,
And where he lives with such a fame,
Indeed I'll say you are to blame,

For truly *inter nos*,
'Tis what belongs to you and me,
And all of high or low degree,
In every sphere to try to be
The worthy Man of Ross.

A SONG ON THE TIMES.

TUNE,—BROOM OF THE COWDENKNOWS.

I.

When I began the world first,
 It was not as 'tis now,
 For all was plain and simple then,
 And friends were kind and true :
 O ! the times, the weary weary times,
 The times that I now see,
 I think the world's all gone wrong,
 From what it used to be.

II.

There were not then high capering heads,
 Prick'd up from ear to ear,
 And clocks and caps were rarities,
 For gentle folks to wear.
 O ! the times the weary weary times, &c.

III.

There's not an upstart mushroom now,
 But what sets up for taste,
 And not a lass in all the land,
 But must be lady-drest.
 O ! the times the weary weary times, &c.

IV.

Our young men married then for love,
 So did our lasses too,
 And children lov'd their parents dear,
 As children ought to do.
 O ! the times, the weary weary times, &c.

V.

For O ! the times are sadly chang'd,
 A heavy change indeed !
 For truth and friendship are no more,
 And honesty is fled.
 O ! the times, the weary weary times, &c.

VI.

'There's nothing now prevails but pride,
 Among both high and low,
 And strife, and greed, and vanity,
 Is all that's minded now.
 O ! the times, the weary weary times, &c.

VII.

When I look through the world wide,
 How times and fashions go,
 It draws the tears from both my eyes,
 And fills my heart with woe.
 O ! the times, the weary weary times,
 The times that I now see,
 I wish the world were at an end,
 For it will not mend for me !

SONG.

ON

THE SCOTCH MILITIA.

TUNE,—ROY'S WIFE IN ARDEVALICH.



Saw ye e'er a lawland lassie
 Happy in her lawland laddie ?
 I was she sae blythe and gawsie,
 As though I'd ca'd the king my daddie.
 My laddie, was my heart's delight,
 Kind and canty was my Johnnie,
 In liking him had I the wyte,
 Whan a' the warld ca'd him bonnie ?

II.

Our bridal day was set, and a' thing
 Ready made to pit's together,
 My tartan plaid, and mony bra' thing
 I gat frae my honest mither,
 A short fourteen days, Johnnie sware it,
 Wu'd make me a' his ain for ever,
 And right glad was I to hear it,
 We sud now be parted never,

III

But O ! there cam a wearie order,
 About a thing they ca' *militie* ;
 Ye cam frae hyn ayont the border,
 O ! waly fa' the chiel that feish ye !
 Cam to tak my Johnnie frae me,
 Left me here to mourn about him,
 And till he back again cum to me,
 I'll never easy be without him.

IV.

Sae ance I thought, till ae lang night,
 About my Johnnie I was dreamin,
 Whan i' my sleep I saw him bright,
 Wi' mony gentlemen and wimen ;
 He took my hand afore them a'
 And gae me kindly kisses plenty,
 A saxpence fyte he brak in twa,
 His words were sweet as ony dainty.

V.

“ Till my militia days are ended,
 “ Jeanie ye maun wait wi' pleasure,
 “ Whan King and Country I've defended,
 “ Ye shall then be a' my treasure.
 “ Ye shall hear my gallant story,
 “ How I fought in Jeanie's favour ;
 “ Fought wi' Frenchmen a' for glory,
 “ And from their cruel claws to save her.”

VI.

When Scotland's faes are fairly frighten'd,
Never mair to glory o'er her,
Then our hearts will a' be lighten'd
- Frae ony fear o' the great devourer.
Sae I'll yield to my country's laws,
And pray for her and Johnnie's honour ;
Whan he is fighting in her cause,
May blessings ever light upon her !

A
FAMILIAR EPISTLE.

TO

CAPTAIN R***** B*****,

WHO FROM BEING A JAMAICA SHIPMASTER BE-
CAME A SUTHERLAND FARMER.



I.

“ Ay, ay, what’s this ?” I ken you’ll say,

“ And whare comes this epistle frae ?”

Forsooth it comes frae Linshart brae,

Whare anes we twa

Us’d to be merry mony a day :

But that’s awa’.

II.

I want to crack a touchie wi’ you,

Since now I’ve little chance to see you,

It’s a’ the guid that I can do you

To wiss you weel,

And pray the Lord may ever gie you,

Baith hae and heal !

III.

Ye've taen a jump leuks right gigantic,
 To norland hills frae gulf Atlantic ;
 And fowk may think ye some wee frantic,
 In sic a lowp ;
 But tarry breeks was ay romantic,
 And lykit scowp.

IV.

Better, ye'll say, be telling tales
 Aneath a reef o' highland dales,
 Or greeving follows at their flails,
 In barns weel thackit,
 Than hoize and furl at flappin sails
 Wi' droukit jacket.

V.

I doubt na, whan ye steer'd your ship,
 The bleed has aft gane frae your lip,
 Now ye may lie upo' your hip,
 And tak your ease ;
 Or thro' the hills a hunting skip
 As far's you please.

VI.

Your hawsers and your fleeand sheets,
 Ye've turn'd them into sowms and theets,
 An' a' your sough o' sonsie fleets,
 An shippin news,
 Is fawin awa' to coupling breets,
 An' trailing pleughs.

VII.

Yet mony a risk's in farmin'-wark,
 Tho' pleugh, and purse, and a' be stark,
 It's but like rinnin i' the dark,

Whare mony ane
 Has run fou sair and mist their mark,
 Whan a' was dane.

VIII.

I wadna hae ye o'er soon boast,
 Or count your winnins by your cost,
 A dreel o' wind, or nip o' frost,
 Or some sic flap,
 Has aft the farmer's prospects crost,
 And fell'd the crap.

IX.

Sae live at land's ye did at sea,
 Uncertain now what neist may be,
 There's naething sure to you nor me,
 Aneath the meen,
 But that we baith sometime maun die,
 Lord kens how sein !

X.

Nae doubt your schemes may right weel wirk,
 'Mang girssy glens and braes o' birk.
 Wi' mony a staig, and mony a stirk,
 An' fowth o' gear ;
 But what comes o' ye for a Kirk,
 Gin I might speir ?

XI.

I've spoken to a frien' o' mine,
An' onest aefauld soun' divine,
Gin he cou'd sometimes wi' you-dine,
Ye've seen the man,
And do't he will, I ken his stryne,
As far's he can.

XII.

Be that as 't may, keep true and tight,
To what ye ken to be the right,
An' whare ye hae na best o' light,
Tak' what ye hae,
But dinna turn a graceless wight,
For ony say.

XIII.

Now binna sayin' I'm ill bred,
Else o' my troth, I'll no be glad,
For cadgers, ye hae heard it said,
And sic like fry,
Maun ay be harlin in their trade,
An sae maun I.

XIV.

An' yet I wad on nae pretence,
Incline to gie a frien' offence,
Nor wad I had sae little mense,
As gane sae far,
Had ye not been the lad o' sense,
I'm seer ye are.

XV.

Ye ken or e'er ye got a frock,
I took you in to my sma' flock,
An' ye and I have had a trock
 This forty year,
Sae what I gab in sooth or joke,
 Ye e'en maun bear.

XVI.

My love to a' about *Midgairty*;
To Menie, Bob, and bonny Bertie,
I hope ye fin't as braw a pairtie
As mill o' Rora,
Lang may ye a' keep hail and hairtie,
An free o' sorrow.

XVII.

Now, Robie, fareweel for a time,
My muse ye see 's nae way sublime,
But 's rattled out a leash o' rhyme,
Sic as was in her,
An a' to tell you just that I 'm
Your frien' JOHN SKINNER,

TO
A YOUNG BOOKSELLER.

I.

I got your letter, honest cock,
And thank you for your kindly joke ;
But d'ye think a saughin block
The like o' me,
Can furnish out a decent stock
O' poetrie ?

II.

Wad ye hae me be sic a fiel,
As gin I were but at the skuil,
To gather ilka rhyme or reel
That I hae scrawl'd,
An gie them out to ony chiel,
To be o'erhawl'd ?

III.

Na, na, my lad, that winna do,
I ken the warld better now ;
Whan I was young and daft like you
It might hae dane,
But near threescore wad best I trow,
Lat that alane.

IV.

Besides, I'm tauld, the singin Lasses,
 That heft sae aft about Parnassus,
 Were never fond o' sober asses,
 That cou'd na drink
 A score or twa o' bumper glasses,
 To mend their clink.

V.

Your bucks that birl the forain berry,
 Claret, and port, and sack, and sherry,
 Or ev'n as muckle English perry
 As they can draw :
 I dinna mein them to be merry,
 And lilt awa'.

VI.

But that camsteary what-d' ye-caw't
 (I think it's genius, walie fa't,)
 That helps the Poet to create
 Baith form and matter,
 Will never dreep frae draffy mawt,
 Or bare spring water.

VII.

An' then there 's that ill hadden ghaist,
 That *Gerard* has sae finely grac'd
 Wi stately stile, and ca't her "*Taste,*"
 A pox upon her,
 She winna let a poor auld Priest
 Gain muckle honour.

VIII.

Now baith o' them's aboon my reach,
 For a' that I can fraise or fleitch,
 What tho' fowk says that I can preach,
 Nae that dein ill,
 I tell you, man, I hae na speech
 For critics' skill.

IX.

It's them that fleys me wi' their taws,
 Their cankart cuffs, and whitty whaws,
 An' troth the carlies might hae cause,
 To curse and bann,
 Gin I were ane that sought applause
 Frae ony man.

X.

But now and then to spin a line
 Or twa, nor fash the tunefu' nine ;
 I'm seir, there's nae man needs repine,
 Whae'er he be,
 Critic, or bard, o' hamil kine,
 Or high degree.

XI.

Yet after a' I'm unco' sweir
 To lat you print the idle geir
 That I've made up this forty year,
 And some guid mair,
 Ye wadna clear the cost, I fear,
 Wi' a' the ware.

XII.

But, may be, gin I live as lang,
 As nae to fear the chirmin chang
 Of Gosses grave, that think me wrang,
 And even say't,
 I may consent to lat them gang,
 And tak their fate.

XIII.

Remember me to a' our friends,
 The lads like you that lie their lanes,
 And them that's gotten bonny Jeans
 To lie aside them,
 Lang may they fitt the causey stanes,
 An' guid betide them !

AN ANSWER IN KIND,

TO

A LETTER FROM PORTSOY.

I.

WHAT can ye be that cou'd employ
 Your pen in a sic a firly-toy,
 Frae hyne awa' as far's Portsoy
 Aside the sea,
 Whare I ken neither man nor boy,
 Nor ane kens me ?

II.

Be wha ye will, ye're unco frush
 At praising what's nae worth a rush,
 Except it be to show how flush
 Ye're at sic sport,
 Yet tho' ye even gar me blush,
 I thank you for't.

III.

For, troth, I ha'ena seen a letter
 This mony a day I likit better ;
 Ye ken there's something in our nature
 Likes to be reez'd ;
 Be't just or no, makes little matter,
 An we be pleas'd.

IV.

My sangs, it seems, hae made a din,
 But still I hope it's nae a sin,
 Sometimes to tirl a merry pin
 As weel's we're able,
 Whan fowks are in a laughin bin
 For sang or fable.

V.

It's bat about sic smeerless things,
 That my auld doited maiden sings,
 She never fykes wi' flighty flings
 Of heathen Gods;
 Nor seeks to please or pester kings
 Wi' birth-day odes.

VI.

And yet may be some girnin gowks
 May tak the pett at harmless jokes,
 And think sic simple silly strokes
 O' poetrie,
 Far unbecomin sacred fowks
 The like o' me.

VII.

What tho' some Sage o' holy quorum,
 Should lightlie me for Tillygorum,
 I'll never steer my sturdy for him,
 Wha e'er he be;
 As lang's I ken to keep decorum
 As well as he.

VIII.

Indeed I wad on nae pretence
 Wiss to tyne sight o' reverence ;
 Sae, if sic fowk be men o' sense,
 I ask their pardon,—
 But value not a fool's offence
 Ae single fardin.

IX.

Your M. A.s and your L. L. D.s,
 That get a vogue and make a fraize,
 I dinna hadd them worth three straes,
 Wi' a' their fame ;
 Nor do I envy ony praise
 That's gi'en to them.

X.

A frien' like you delights me sair,
 An' hits my fancy till a hair,
 Sae couthy and sae debonnair,
 An' then sae plain ;
 It does nae need a birn o' lair
 To write again.

XI.

Now, honest onkent, fare ye weel,
 I guess you be some pawky chiel,
 That's may be been at Allan's skuil
 Some orra time,
 And eems to understand the tweel
 O' rustic rhyme.

XII.

But print nae mair, I beg it o' you,
 Lest CHA'MERS say, he's plaguit wi' you,
 You see I have nae thing to gie you
 That's worth your while,
 But only send my wisses to you,
 I' your ain style.

XIII.

Lord keep you, man, frae sin and shame;
 Frae skaith a' outing, and at hame;
 An gie you ay, (blest be his name!)
 What he thinks fit;
 'Tak' this frae me in kindly frame,
 Instead o' wit.

WRITTEN AT THE DESIRE OF

A LADY

WHO DID NOT LIKE BURNS' "ADDRESS TO
"A LOUSE ON A LADY'S BONNET."

I.

A LOUSIE on a lady's bonnet!
Disgracefu' dirgy! fie upon it!
An' you, forsooth, to write a sonnet
 On sic a theme!
Guid fa' me, man, I wad na done it
 For a' your fame.

II.

Nae doubt your ballad's wise and witty;
But fowks will say it was na pretty
To yoke sic twa in conjunct ditty,
 Them baith to hit;
And ca' you but a twa-fac'd nitty,
 Wi' a' your wit.

III.

For a' your being a bard of note,
Ye shou'd na minded sic a mote,

To mak a warl's wonner o't,
 As ye hae dane ;
 But past it for an orra spot,
 Whare 't shou'd na been.

IV.

Your philosophic fitty fies,
 Tho' clad in sweet poetic guise,
 The ladies will them a' despise,
 Gin ye express
 The least rebaghle ony wise
 Upo' their dress.

V.

When ye bemoan'd the herryt mousie,
 Rinning as gin't had been frae pousie ;
 When couter-nib down-stroy'd her housie,
 Ye pleas'd us a' ;
 But thus to lilt about a lousie,
 Black be your fa' !

VI.

What tho' at godly Ayrshire meeting,
 Sic thing had happen'd past dispeeting,
 Was that aneugh to fa' a writing
 About a story,
 That ladies canna hear repeating
 Wi' ony glory ?

VII.

Its nae mows matter, man, to jibe
 Your jeer-cuts at the sweet-fac'd tribe ;

Their charms will ay some body bribe

To tak side wi' them,

Whan chieles like you set up to scribe

O'er freely o' them.

VIII.

The bonny Duchess, seil upon her !

That's heez'd you up to a' your honour,

And been to you sae braw a Donor,

May say " what raiks !"

And think ye 've flung some wee dishonour

At a' the sex.

IX.

Fouk wad do well to steek their een,

At sights that shou'd na a' be seen,

Or whan they see, lat jokes alane,

Gin they had sense ;

For little jokes hae aften gein

Fell great offence.

X.

I'se warran ye hae read or heard,

Of an ald hairum-skairum bard,

Saw anes a sight was as ill-fawrd *,

As your's cou'd be ;

An for his sight got sma' reward,

And sae may ye,

* " Cur aliquid vidi, cur noxia lumina feci ?" -- OVID.

XI.

Sae ROBIE BURNS tak tent in time,
And keep mair haivins wi' your rhyme,
Else you may come to rue the crime
O' sic a sonnet,
And wiss ye had ne'er seen a styme
O' Louse nor Bonnet.

THE

OWL AND THE ASS,

AN INNOCENT FABLE.

I.

ONCE on a time, no matter when,
Nor under what a king,
But so it was, in yonder wood
An Owl began to sing :

II.

With phiz so grave, and whoop so loud,
He made a learned din,
And all the burden of his song
Was " O ! the light within !

III.

" This inward light, this jewel hid
" Is all in all to me,
" By it I know, I judge, and act,
" Nor would I wish to see.

IV.

" What blockheads call external guides,
" I'm wiser far without,

“ And had I eyes, as others have,
 “ I’d surely pluck them out.

V.

“ No foreign help do I require,
 “ To guide my flights of youth,
 “ For *common sense* is all I need
 “ To lead me into truth.

VI.

“ When in self-cogitation wrapt,
 “ I use my Light innate,
 “ ’Tis then I search th’ eternal laws
 “ Of nature and of fate.

VII.

“ Your outward light may be of use
 “ To yonder herd of fools,
 “ The light within is what directs
 “ Philosophers and owls.”

VIII.

An Ass, who long had been his friend,
 Pricks up his leathern ears,
 And gapes and swallows every note,
 Like music of the spheres.

IX.

“ So sweet a song so wondrous sweet,
 “ Was ever such a strain ?
 “ And O ! my dearest Doctor Owl,
 “ Repeat it o’er again !”

X.

Charm'd with the sound of booby's praise,
The self-taught Sage agrees,
And makes additions here and there
A second time to please.

IX.

Then o'er and o'er like minstrels meet,
They both in concert act,
And what the one demurely sings,
The other echoes back.

XII.

And now the Ass is qualified
To play the Teacher's part,
Till every ass in yonder wood
Has got the song by heart.

Some silly remarks on the above, having appeared in the Newspapers, under the mask of "A SCAMPING WOLF," produced the following REPLY.

I.

How must fair Science now revive,
And Truth lift up her head,
When owls thus sing, and asses learn,
And wolves vouchsafe to read?

II.

That birds and beasts in old times spoke,
We know from Æsop's page,
But never one essay'd to *read*,
Till this enlightened age.

III.

Thrice happy age above what has
In former ages been,
And blest the land, above all lands,
Where such rare sights are seen.

IV.

Philosophy shall surely now
 Her blossoms wide expand,
 And good old heathen wisdom shed
 Her blessings o'er the land.

V.

Long therefore may Minerva's bird
 Possess unrivall'd fame,
 And long may all the long ear'd tribe
 Their praises loud proclaim !

VI.

And O ! that every "*scampering wolf*"
 Would thus employ his time,
 To " sport himself with paper scraps,"
 And snarl in harmless rhyme.

AN OLD
 PROPHECY OF THOMAS THE RHYMER
INTERPRETED,

WHEN THE UNION WAS PROPOSED BETWEEN
 KING'S AND MARISCHALL COLLEGES.

'ERE SCOTIA was by Longshanks thrall'd,
 A noted bard she had,
 And THOMAS RHYMER he was call'd,
 As I have somewhere read.
 Thro' Albion's regions far and wide
 Of mighty fame he was,
 And wondrous things he prophesy'd
 Should sometime come to pass.
 "That DEE and DON should run in one,"
 'Mong other things he told,
 But to this day 'twas never known
 How such a thing could hold.
 In mystic garb his speech he drest,
 As prophets use to do,
 And what he darkly thus exprest,
 Begins to open now.

'Twas not that Don should run to Dee,
 Or Dee run into Don,
 But that their *Colleges* should be
 . United into one.

In honour then of Scotland's bard
 May *King* and *Earl* agree,
 And *royal* DON not think it hard,
 To join with *martial* DEE.

So shall Philosophy's fair streams
 Enlarge their former course,
 And Learning's congregated beams
 Shall shine with double force.

A

LETTER TO A FRIEND,

ON GIVING UP A FARM WHICH THE AUTHOR HELD
OF THE EARL OF ERROL.

You ask, my friend, whence comes this sudden flight
Of parting thus with husbandry outright?
What mean I by so strange a foolish whim,
Am I in earnest, or think you I but dream?
True, you may think so, but suspend, I pray,
Your judgment, till you hear what I can say.
I join with you that there is no great harm
In clergy-folks to hold a little farm.
But poverty's the scourge, and I can tell,
As dire a scourge as any out of Hell:
The farm indeed can furnish malt and meal,
But gentry must have more than cakes and ale.
There's wife, and sons, and daughters to maintain,
Sons must be bred, and daughters will be vain,
What signifies, that they can knit or spin?
There's twenty needs for all that they can win.

Thus one needs this, another she needs that,
 Ribbons, and gloves, and lace, and God knows what.
 As far as their own penny goes they pay,
 When that is spent, they then must take a day,
 “ Papa will clear ’t;” they have no more to say.

You can’t imagine how much I ’m distrest,
 There’s not a day that I enjoy rest :
 Except on that blest day the first in seven,
 That day appointed, as it was in Heaven !
 Then I’m myself : For when the gown goes on,
 I’m no more Farmer then but Pres’ter John.
 The folks with pleasure hear me sermonize,
 And once a week I’m reckon’d learn’d and wise ;
 The pulpit brings me into peoples favours,
 And Sunday screens from creditors and cravers :
 But Monday comes of course, and then begins
 A new week’s penance for the last week’s sins.
 The mistress takes the morning by the top,
 She must have tea and sugar, starch and soap,
 Candles and hops, all which are now so dear,
 I answer nothing, but am forc’d to hear.

In comes the ploughman with important brow,
 “ Well, Thomas lad, and what would you say now ?”
 “ We’re out of iron, the horses must be shod,
 “ The coulter needs a lay :”—“ That ’s very odd ;
 “ Go to the merchant”—“ He has none come home,”
 (I know the cause, but must conceal ’t from Tom,)
 “ Why, then, we’ll get it somewhere else.”—“ That’s true,
 “ The plough needs claithing and must have it new,

“ We cannot do without a foremost yoke,
 “ And t’other day the meikle stilt was broke.”
 “ Well I shall see about it.”—Tom goes out,
 And I get clear of him for once about.

There’s one knocks—“ Is the minister within ?”
 The servant answers “ yes,” and he comes in :
 “ Well John, I’m glad to see you ; how d’ ye do ?”
 “ I thank you Parson, how goes all with you ?”
 “ Sit down ! what news ?”—“ not much, the times are
 “ hard :
 (I know what’s coming now, and am prepar’d,)
 “ I’ve got a rub, I ne’er got any such,”
 “ I’m sorry for ’t, but hope it is not much.”
 “ Why, faith, a great deal, forty pounds and more,
 “ I can assure you, will not clear the score :”
 “ What way ?”—“ by that damn’d rascal Duncan Aire,
 “ Losses like this must soon make merchants bare,
 “ And force them many times to seek their own,
 “ Sooner than otherwise they would have done.”
 “ Afflictions, John, you know will always be,—”
 “ The little trifle; Sir, ’twixt you and me,”
 “ Betty, bring in a drink—here’s to you, John,”
 “ Your good health, Parson,” drinks and then goes on :
 I study all I can to ward the blow,
 And try to shift the subject but no—no ;
 What can I do, but tell how matters stand ;
 “ I cannot pay you,—money’s not at hand,
 “ As soon’s I can I’ll do ’t,”—John in a huff,
 Says, “ Parson, fare ye well”—and so walks off.

Now I expect some ease, when, in a crack,
 In comes a note, with *Reverence* on the back :
 “ Sir, times are bad, I know not what to do,
 “ I ’m in a strait, else had not troubled you,
 “ Have sent you your account, which please peruse,
 “ Errors excepted—hopes your kind excuse.
 “ A draught comes on me, money must be got,
 “ And I ’ll be ruined, if you send it not ;
 “ At any other time you may command,
 “ And shall be serv’d with what I have in hand,
 “ So, Sir, no more at present, but remains.”
 This must be answered, so I rack my brains,
 And fall to work, part argue, partly flatter,
 Be ’t taken well or ill makes little matter ;
 Debtors must still be dungeons of good nature. }
 My Lord’s officer comes next, with “ Sir, I ’m sent,
 “ To warn you in to pay the Whitsun rent :
 “ The factor’s angry, and bade tell you so,
 “ That you ’re so long in paying what you owe,
 “ Expects you will with speed provide the sum,
 “ And be more punctual in time to come :”
 I hing my head betwixt chagrin and awe,
 For officers, you know, are limbs of law.

Thus farm and house demands come on together,
 Both must be answer’d, I can answer neither ;
 I put them off till Lammas, Lammas comes,
 Our vestry meets, and I get in my sums ;
 The half year’s stipend makes a pretty show,
 But twenty ways poor fifteen pounds must go :
 Scarce one night does it in my coffers stay,
 Like Jonah’s gourd that wither’d in a day ;

First come, first serv'd with me, is still the way ;
 Then for my Lord, whatever comes to pass,
 My Lord must even wait till Martinmas :
 Well, Martinmas a few weeks hence comes on,
 As certainly it will : what's to be done ?
 Shoemakers, tailors, butchers, to be paid,
 For shoes, and clothes, and meat, must all be had :
 There's servants fees, and forty things beside ;
 How then can fifteen pounds so far divide ?
 Why ! we'll set through, and try another year,
 The worst is but the worst, let's never fear ;
 My Lord, God bless him, is a gracious man,
 And he can wait awhile, if any can ;
 We'll sell some meal, perhaps, or spare a cow ;
 But what will be the case, if that wont do :
 Why then I'll borrow ! I have many a friend ;
 There's such and such a one, all rich, and surely kind ;
 Well they're applied to, and behold the end :
 They all condole indeed, but cannot lend ;
 They're griev'd to see the minister in strait,
 And fain would help him, but I come too late.
 And, after trying every shift in vain,
 The old distressful life returns again.
 Would any friend advise me thus to bear
 Repeated strokes like these, from year to year ?
 No ! th' event, be what it will, prepar'd am I,
 And now resolv'd another course to try :
 Sell corn and cattle off ; pay every man ;
 Get free of debt and duns as fast's I can :
 Give up the farm with all its wants, and then,
 Why even take me to the book and pen,
 The fittest trade I find, for **CLERGYMEN**.

ON THE
FRENCH CONVENTION.

WHAT stupid creatures are the French,
Quite free from superstition ;
Yet when they die, 'tis hard to say,
What can be their condition ?

Of Heaven they entertain no thought,
Since it can no way fit them ;
And as for hell, the *despot* there
Has more sense than admit them.

If then for Hell they have no chance,
And to Heav'n have no pretension ;
Some other dwelling must be found,
To lodge the FRENCH CONVENTION.

Or, as their new philosophy
Has laid the fine foundation,
Their only prospect now must be
A blest *annihilation*.

How must these miscreant wretches move—
Our anger, or our laughter,
Who wish to live like monsters here,
And *nothing* be hereafter !

Preserve us *Reason*, taught by *Grace*,
From reveries so beastly ;
By whomsoever set afloat,
By *Price*, or *Paine*, or *Priestly*.

May Britons thankful still, and wise,
Beware of Gallic leaven ;
So we need have no fear of *Hell*,
And grace will give us *Heaven*.

TO THE
 MEMORY OF A YOUNG GENTLEMAN
 WHO DIED OF THE SMALL POX.

'Twas winter, and the sickly sun was low,
 Thro' yonder fields I took my lonely way ;
 Musing on many a gloomy scene of woe,
 As oft I wont in evening calm to stray.

With languid step, advancing I perceiv'd
 A passenger of aspect pale and wan ;
 With frequent sighs his labouring bosom heav'd,
 And down his cheek the briny torrent ran.

“ What ails thee, friend ? (I ask'd in pitying tone
 Of sympathetic mood to speak relief)

“ Say, what's the cause that makes thee thus to moan,
 “ And why thy visage pictur'd thus with grief ?”

“ Shall I not moan ?” (the stranger sad reply'd)

“ And thus in sighs my inward grief express ?

“ How can my troubled heart its sorrows hide ?

“ My melting soul conceal its deep distress ?

- “ Last week a darling brother was my boast,
 “ The last born product of my mother’s womb ;
 “ This darling brother t’ other day I lost,
 “ To day I laid him in the silent tomb.
- “ Meek his deportment, and his manners mild,
 “ In all his carriage undisguis’d and plain ;
 “ As virgin chaste, and soft as new born child,
 “ Comely his features, and his look serene.
- “ Steady in principle, and in practice pure,
 “ With modesty and manly sense endued ;
 “ His honest heart from vanity secure,
 “ The paths of vice with just abhorrence view’d.
- “ Not poorly mean, nor anxious to be great,
 “ His mind tho’ lofty, and his genius bright ;
 “ Yet pleas’d and happy in his humble state,
 “ And Music, heavenly gift, his dear delight !
- “ How gracefully, amidst th’ applauding ring,
 “ His well taught fingers mov’d the lyre along ;
 “ Whether to mirth he briskly struck the string,
 “ Or on soft psalt’ry touch’d the sacred song !
- “ Oft have I seen, when jocund friends were met,
 “ In summer’s evenings or by winter’s fire ;
 “ The listening choir in emulation set !
 “ What tongue should most th’ enchanting youth admire !
- “ But now no more his notes shall charm the fair,
 “ No more his Numbers soothe th’ attentive Swain,

“ With Tullochgorum’s dance-inspiring air,
 “ Or Roslin-castle’s sweet, but solemn strain.

“ In early dawn of merit and of fame,
 “ To wish’d-for health, from sickness just restor’d ;
 “ The loathsome pustules seiz’d his tender frame,
 “ And sudden gave the stroke that’s now deplor’d !

“ ’Tis this that grieves me,—this the loss I mourn,
 “ Excuse a sorrowing brother’s heavy tale ;
 “ No more shall he to earth and me return,
 “ Nor sighs, nor tears, nor love, can now prevail !”

He stopt, the tears again began to flow,
 And sigh on sigh burst from his throbbing breast ;
 My feeling heart soon catch’d the poor man’s woe,
 And soon my eye the rising tear confest.

“ Dear youth,” I cry’d, “ whom heav’n has call’d away,
 “ ’Midst early innocence from this vain stage ;
 “ Safe now, we hope, in fields of endless day,
 “ Above the follies of a sinful age !

“ In these bright regions fill’d with many a Saint,
 “ Sweet be thy rest, and blest thy wakening be !
 “ And may kind Heav’n at last in mercy grant
 “ A happy meeting to thy friends and thee !”

TO THE
MEMORY OF A WORTHY FARMER.

WHAT ! shall my rural muse in feeble strain
 Of pompous deaths and titled woes complain,
 And shall she be asham'd to drop a tear
 In public o'er a worthy *Farmer's* bier ?
 A Farmer ! name of universal praise,
 And noble subject for the poet's lays :
 This one, a Farmer of superior mind,
 For higher spheres from early youth design'd,
 Taught to converse with men of rank and note,
 Yet stooping to adorn the rural cot ;
 There, calm and quiet in his humble state,
 Lov'd by the good, and valu'd by the great,
 Disdaining flattery, yet without offence,
 The man of manners, virtue, grace, and sense.
 In Agriculture's wide extended tract
 Skill'd and instructive, punctual and exact,
 Prudent from principle in every part,
 Which or concerns the head, or moves the heart.
 To God religious, to his neighbour just,
 And strictly honest in each branch of trust ;
 Ne'er jarring from himself, but still the same,
 Clear in his thoughts, and steady in his aim ;

In speech engaging and in taste refin'd,
 The Farmer's pattern, and the scholar's friend.
 To such a Farmer surely praise is due,
 And all who knew him can declare it true,
 Can tell how uniform o'er life's vain stage
 He stept in virtue's paths to good old age.
 Fair was his life, and blest, we hope, his end ;
 To each good man may Heav'n such mercy send !
 Asks any reader who this man could be,
 So much esteem'd by all, and prais'd by me :
 Know, honest friend, that in thy way to fame,
 A Farmer's footsteps do thy notice claim,
 And JAMES ARBUTHNOT was that Farmer's name. }

A

MONUMENTAL INSCRIPTION.



AND is she gone, the once so lovely maid,
 Gone hence, and now a dear departed shade !
 Snatch'd from this world in early dawn of life,
 When but beginning to be call'd a wife ?

Ye virgin tribe, whom chance may lead this way,
 Where brightest beauty moulders into clay,
 Behold this stone, nor be asham'd to mourn
 A while o'er MARY ALEXANDER'S urn—
 Then pause a little, while these lines you read,
 And learn to draw instruction from the dead—
 She, who lies here, was once like one of you,
 Youthful and blyth, and fair, as you are now :
 One week beheld her a bright blooming bride,
 In marriage pomp laid by her lover's side ;
 The next we saw her in death's livery drest,
 And brought her breathless body here to rest.
 Not all this world's gay hopes, nor present charms,
 Nor parents tears, nor a fond husband's arms,

Could stamp the least impression on her mind,
Or fix to earth a soul for heav'n design'd ;
Calmly she left a scene so lately try'd,
Heav'n call'd her hence, with pleasure she complied, }
Embrac'd her sorrowing friends, then smil'd—and dy'd. }

ON

A FARMER'S GRAVESTONE,

IN THE CHURCH-YARD OF LONGSIDE.

HERE lies, consign'd a while to promis'd rest,
 In hopes to rise again among the blest,
 The precious dust of one, whose course of life
 Knew neither fraud, hypocrisy, nor strife :
 A Husband loving, and of gentle mind ;
 A Father careful, provident and kind ;
 A Farmer active, from no sordid view ;
 A Christian pious, regular, and true :
 One who, in quiet, trod the private stage
 Of rural labour, to a ripe old age.
 Lov'd by his neighbours, honour'd by his own ;
 Liv'd without spot, and died without a groan.

Long may his humble virtues be rever'd ;
 Long be his name remember'd with regard ;
 And long may Agriculture's school produce
 Such honest men as ALEXANDER BRUCE.

Si musæ fas sit pietatis pangere laudes,
 Quid vetat Agricolas commemorasse pios ?

TO A

YOUNG CLERGYMAN,

ON THE DEATH OF HIS MOTHER AND A BROTHER,
CRUSHED BY THE SUDDEN FALL OF
THEIR DWELLING-HOUSE.

How hard, Lorenzo, is the boon you ask,
And how unequal I to such a task ?
I, whose weak muse, borne down with weight of years,
O'er common griefs might shed some tender tears,
But finds her powers of lamentation fail,
And sinks and sickens at thy doleful tale ?

A Mother ! (ah, the venerable name,
Which my young lips were never taught to frame,)
She, whose warm bowels form'd thy infant span,
Whose tenderest watchings nurs'd thee up to man,
She, earthly image of the highest love,
Which ev'n the yearnings of a God could move !

A Brother, too ! the next congenial tie
Of strongest force in nature's symmetry !
Thy partner thro' a course of prattling years,
In all youth's fondnesses, and all its fears !

Both in a moment robb'd of vital breath,
 And quick and sudden hurry'd into death !
 No hasty fever, no slow pac'd decay,
 To snatch the young, or wear the old away ;
 The humble cot, which, for convenience rear'd,
 Harbour'd no mischief, and no danger fear'd,
 Where, by the cheerful fire in peace secure,
 They now had spent the pleasant evening hour,
 Crush'd all at once by one stupendous shock
 Of tumbling rubbish from th' impending rock !
 No sturdy pillars to support the weight
 Of such a burthen, thrown from such a height ;
 The unsuspecting victims, half undrest,
 In preparation for a sweet night's rest ;
 No boding omen heard, no warning giv'n,
 No time to lift their souls and eyes to heav'n ;
 Bury'd beneath th' enormous mass all round,
 And breathing, tomb'd in dust above the ground ;
 Their shatter'd limbs all into atoms crash'd,
 And bones and bowels to one chaos dash'd !!

But why attempt description ? words are vain !
 The dreadful ruin mocks my languid strain—
 And does my friend need counsel how to bear
 This wound so piercing, a stroke indeed severe ;
 Then think on what thy hoary sire must feel,
 (For sure thy sire had not a heart of steel)
 When by next dawn return'd from distant toil,
 In hopes of welcome from thy mother's smile,
 He saw, and star'd, and gaz'd at this and that,
 And hop'd, and fear'd, and wish'd he knew not what ?

'Till, like a voice, he heard from menial maid,
 With wife and son in dire sepulchre laid,¹
 Who ten long hours had groan'd an age of pain,
 And just expiring, breath'd the how and when.
 Now view him in a gulph of horror cast,
 His heart-strings breaking, and his eyes aghast,
 Like pictur'd patience, all benumb'd he stands,
 And tries to lift, but drops his trembling hands ;
 No groan his heart emits, his eye no tear—
 Good heaven ! what more can mortals suffer here ?

'Tis this, you say, that aggravates the smart,
 'Tis this that doubly rends the filial heart.
 True, unfledg'd sufferer, thou hast much to do,
 To act the *Son*, and shine the *Christian* too :
 Insensible to this what heart can be,
 Not form'd of marble, or hewn out of tree ?
 Lorenzo's heart, tho' cut, must not repine
 At what, it knows, comes from a hand divine ;
 But strive in due submission to comply,
 Nor boldly dare to guess the reason why.
 The philosophic sage, from self's proud school,
 May act, or feign to act, th' heroic fool :
 At nature's feelings may pretend to mock,
 And wisely sullen, stand th' appalling shock.
 The heav'n-taught Christian may, and must do more,
 May grieve from nature, must from grace adore ;
 Adore the love of ev'n a chast'ning God,
 And kiss the gracious hand that wields the rod.

ON THE MUCH LAMENTED
DEATH OF THE AUTHOR,

BY

CHRISTIAN MILNE OF FOOTDEE,

ABERDEEN.



SEE where GENIUS drooping stands,
Swell'd with grief her bosom fair,
Tearful eyes, and folded hands,
Mark her wild disorder'd air.

' Alas ! my Son,' she cries, and art thou laid
' With all thy powers in this low grassy bed ?

' What happy parent e'er could show
' More life and spirit in a child ;
' How did my heart with joy o'erflow,
' When I on thee delighted smil'd ?

' But now how quick to grief my joy is turn'd,
' And thou my Son must daily thus be mourn'd !

' The tuneful nine have strew'd thy tomb
' With nature's simplest, sweetest flow'rs,
' And taste will long admire their bloom ;
' For what's so fair as nature's bow'rs ?

‘ I too will plant the fadeless laurel there,
 ‘ And bathe thy turf with many a drop sincere.

‘ Though age had silver’d o’er thy hair,
 ‘ Bright thy talents beam’d and strong,
 ‘ As when thy youth, with morning fair,
 ‘ Breath’d the sweet enlivening song ;
 ‘ Scarce had I left thee, one short hour alone,
 ‘ Quick I return’d, but thou wert ever gone.

A radiant ANGEL hover’d o’er
 Thy yet belov’d, though breathless clay ;
 “ Bright maid” said he, “ thy power no more
 “ On earth thy favourite will display .
 “ By thee his mortal brow has oft been crown’d,
 “ Immortal now with fairer wreath ’tis bound.

“ A tender flock the Pow’r Supreme
 “ Had plac’d beneath his watchful eye,
 “ Oft did he look to Heav’n for them,
 “ And seek what might their wants supply :
 “ The pastoral care did all his thoughts employ,
 “ Till call’d from hence to meet his Master’s joy.

“ He felt not nature’s pangs in death,
 “ But as the Fathers did of old,
 “ Without a sigh resign’d his breath—
 “ Blest privilege of the faithful fold !
 “ His lyre harmonious now is us’d above,
 “ To sing the true, the good, th’ Almighty Shepherd’s
 “ love.

- “ He ask’d not Heav’n for wealth nor power,
“ For these, he knew, brought countless harms,
“ But that his life’s last parting hour
“ Might pass in his dear childrens arms.
“ And lo ! by them surrounded, full of years,
“ He died in peace : Bright maid, wipe off thy tears !”

The Editor feels a strong desire to subjoin another Elegiac lay from the same pen, occasioned by the death of MRS SKINNER, wife of BISHOP SKINNER, Aberdeen, the 4th day of March 1807, written in August following.

SHALL weary pilgrims on their way
 Meet countless dangers as they go,
 Yet wish they onward still may stray,
 To kiss the shrine, and end their woe!

Shall man, to pain and trouble born,
 Still to life's sunshine fondly trust!
 Ev'n poets sing—"Man 's made to mourn,"
 And dire experience proves it just.

Last eve I view'd a lovely spot,
 But ah! its charms have lost their pow'r,
 Unless the past could be forgot,
 And sorrow's clouds should cease to lour!

I saw the tree's refreshing shade,
 I heard the birds melodious sing;
 I saw the mead with grain o'er spread,
 The fruits, the flow'rs, and chrystal spring!

I found the mansion of my friends,
 But every eye was sunk in woe ;
 I found (what real grief portends)
 The hollow cheek, the furrow'd brow !

For me the rich repast was spread,
 Cull'd from a garden richly stor'd ;
 But ah !—no hostess there—no head
 To grace the hospitable board !

To those who knew my valued friend,
 And can, in life, contemplate death,
 I'd tell how tranquil was her end,
 How she employ'd her parting breath !

Short ere she fled, with zeal impress'd,
 Of JESUS' sacred Feast she shar'd ;
 Nor hop'd so soon to taste, in rest,
 What's for the faithful there prepar'd !

Though sick herself, a dying friend
 She sought, the cheering hope to pour
 Of joys that on the good attend,
 When cares, and pains, and life are o'er !

This done, she slowly homeward sped,
 With painful steps she reach'd the door ;
 The couch of death for her was spread,
 She laid her down—to rise no more !

And thus she spake—" How blest in death
 " Am I, to see my children dear,

“ All pious, wait to catch my breath,
 “ And bathe my cheek with filial tear!

“ Mourn not, as void of hope,” she said,
 “ But kiss the kind chastising rod ;
 “ In all things follow, by His aid,
 “ Your bless’d REDEEMER, and your God.

“ Though sorrows compass you around,
 “ Look forward still to endless rest !
 “ And what agreeable in me you found,
 “ Be ever on your minds impress’d.

“ All praises be to God on high,
 “ Who aids me in this trying hour,
 “ And gives his servant strength to die,
 “ Strength, which exceeds all human power !’

To paint the pains she underwent,
 Requires an abler pen than mine !
 The summons came—she smil’d assent,
 And hail’d of bliss the Source Divine !

Thus fled the best, the kindest wife,
 That ever grac’d a husband’s side ;
 The Christian’s course she walk’d through life,
 And thus, “ *the death of th’ righteous died !*”

ERRATA.

Page	12.	Line	27.	for <i>at the</i> read <i>in the</i>
—	14.	—	6.	for 17 read 18.
—	37.	—	9.	for <i>shins</i> read <i>shin</i> .
—	43.	—	6.	for <i>sae</i> read <i>say</i> .
—	65.	—	2.	for <i>greeting</i> read <i>weeping</i> .
—	101.	—	5.	for <i>in a sic</i> read <i>in sic</i> .

GLOSSARY.

A

AITH, oath.*Athort*, across.*Ava'*, in whole, at all.

B

BA'ING, balling, playing at the ball.*Barkin'd*, coated.*Bauld*, bold.*Best*, threw, beat.*Begeck*, trick, disappointment.*Beil*, home, or shelter.*Binner*, noise.*Binsome*, quarrelsome.*Birl*, push about.*Birr*, stand upright; also noise, force.*Bierly* big.*Blae*, pale.*Blaize*, blow.*Bocking*, vomiting.*Bra*, finely clad.*Brain*, angry.*Brattling*, running tumultuously.*Browdind*, was keen for.*Bruilzie*, fighting match.*Byke*, beehive in the earth.

C

CALLANT, young fellow.*Camshack-kair*, unlucky concern.*Cantie*, chearful, merry.*Chafsts*, mouth, lower part of the face.*Chap*, stroke.*Claise*, clothes.*Clummy-houit*, heavy blow.*Clank*, noise.*Coupit*, tumbled.*Cuist*, cast.*Cunn*, owe, give, pay.

D

DAWING, dawning.*Dawrd*, push, or fling.*Derf*, stout.*Dossd-down*, threw themselves down.*Dowf*, dull.*Dowie*, sad, spiritless.*Dreed*, suffered.*Drochlin*, tottering.*Droukit*, drench'd*Dwabil*, loose, weak.

E

EEMEST, uppermost.*Einds*, refreshment.

F

FANTIT, fainted.*Fat*, what.**Fawt*, fault.*Feish ye*, brought ye.*Feil*, foolish.*Fell-blade*, right foolish.*Fell*, pretty much, not a little.*Ferly*, something strange.

* It may not be improper to remark, that in the Aberdeenshire dialect *wh* is uniformly pronounced *f*; as what, *fat*; white, *fite*, &c.

Fether'd, flew.
Flain, feather.
Fleep, stupid fellow.
Flirr, gnash.
Fleyt, afraid.
Forestam, forehead.
Fou't be, however it be.
Fowth, plenty.
Fricksome fraise, vain
 talking.
Frumppish, ill humoured.
Frush, frank, forward.
Fudder, hurry.
Fuilzie, get the better of.
Fyke, shrugg.
Fykes, troubles
Fyte, white.

G

Gab, speak.
Gae, gave.
Gar, make, force.
Gardy, arm.
Gawsie, well-looking.
Gilpy, blockhead.
Girse, grass.
Glaiket, over fond, giddy.
Glawr'd, made slippery.
Glowr'd, looked wistfully.
Grunsie, sour fellow.
Gosses, dolts.
Gowf, blow.
Grain, groan.
Gullie, large knife.
Gyte, goat.

H

HAE and Heil, wealth and
 health.

Haffets, sides of the head.
Harlan, trailing, bringing.
Harnpans, sculls.
Heels-o'er-goudie, heels
 over head.
Hest, dwelt.
Hempy, name of reproach.
Herryt, beggard.
Heez'd, raised up.
Hinch, thigh.
Huilie, slow.
Hyne, far.

I

INCH, neat.
I wat na fu, I know not
 how.
Ill-faurd, ugly.
Ill hadden ghaist, ill-man-
 nered visitor.

K

KENZIES, fighting throng.

L

LAP, leaped.
Lave, the rest.
Lawing, shot, tavern bill.
Leit, gave a stroke, or ut-
 terance.

M

MAIN'D, moaned.
Mank, fail.
Maun, must.
Mawt, malt.
Mawtin'd lolls, heavy
 clumsy fellows.
Mein them, thank them.

Mensless, without thought.
Mell, fight.
Mird, venture.
Mishanter, misfortune.
Mows, *nae mows*, not easy.
Meen, moon.

N

Neiper, neighbour.
Nitty, little knave.

O

ONKENT unknown.
Orra, idle, spare.
Ouk, week.
Outing, abroad.
Oys, grandchildren.

P

PAWKY, witty, good humoured.
Pensy blades, nice looking lads.
Prann, to hurt, or bruise.
Pree, taste.
Primpit, delicate.

Q

QUEET, ancle.

R

RAIRD, roared.
Raught, reached.
To Rate, to slander.
Rax'd, reached.
Reef, roof.
Rebaghle, reproach.
Red, combed.
Red wud, stark mad.
Rink, run about.

Reeze, to praise.
Reirfu rout, roaring noise.

S

SAIR, very much, sore.
Sauchin, soft.
Sawt, hot as with salt.
Sawt, scabbed.
Scib, stroke.
Scoup'd hame, went home.
Seil, blessing.
Sin', since.
Skaith, hurt, or loss.
Skance, view.
Skunner, be disgusted.
Skypel skate, ugly fellow.
Slee, sly.
Slip his wa, go his way.
Slype, coarse fellow.
Smeddum, cleverness.
Smeerless, simple.
Snack, fit for the purpose.
Snap, ready, clever.
Snype, smart blow.
Sowf, stroke.
Spawl, leg.
Squeeld *squale'd*.
Stalwart, strong, stout.
Steer my sturdy, trouble my head.
Stend, wide step.
Stoit, stumbled.
Stown, stolen.
Strenzeed, sprained.
Stryne, turn of mind.
Swankies, clever lads.
Sweir, slow, backward.
Swoype, stroke.
Syke, bog.

T

TED, toad,
Tent, care.
Thole, bear.
Thrang, busy.
Thra, twist.
Thud, stroke.
Tirr, uncover.
Trypal, ill made fellow.
Tuilzie, struggle.
Tweel, texture.
Tyc'd about, went slowly
 about.

V

Virr, force, fury.

W

WALY FA, woe be to

Weel wyled wap, well chosen stroke.

Weel beft, well beaten.

Wham, a blow.

What-raiks ! what do you deserve !

Wow, an exclamation of pleasure, or wonder.

Wreath o' snaw, drift, or heap of snow.

Wyte, fault.

Y

YAP, forward.

Yark, hard stroke.

Yæfsu, awful.

Yird, earth.

Yowff'd, drave.

Yowl, yell.



Skinner, J.

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hours.

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